My Service Life

by Col. Harvey W. Prosser (retired)

for all the grand &
great-grand kids

Antonia
Octavia

Forrest
Lily

Chris
Lesley
John
Nick
Ross
Sara
Todd
Zach

7.

January 14, 1918. ASM-431.

New

The appointment of Private First Class Harvey William Prosser, Signal Enlisted Reserve Corps, as First Lieutenant in the Aviation Section, Signal Officers' Reserve Corps, is announced. He is placed on active duty, and will report in person to the Commanding Officer, Gerstner Field, Lake Charles, La., for duty.

Adjutant General.

Copy for Chief Signal Officer.

Chapter One

In May of 1917 I was working for my Dad, trying to save enough money to get into college, and the United States was about ready to enter the First World War on the side of the Allies. My good friend, Beverly Holmes, son of our family doctor, told me he had enlisted in the Transportation Section of the Quartermaster Corps as a Sergeant truck driver. I knew that was a good idea, for if we did get in the war, I would have to join up and driving a truck would be something I would enjoy. I went over to San Francisco (I lived in Oakland) to the Q.M. Recruiting Office. Beverly had not enlisted as yet, and I was the first one in the Bay Area to join the Q.M. Corps. While I was signing the enlistment papers, a reporter and photographer of The Call-Bulletin were on hand to give me a little publicity.

Beverly did enlist, and a few days later he told me that he was going to transfer to the Aviation Section of the Signal Enlisted Reserve Corps as a Flying Cadet and become an aviator. That sure sounded good, and I asked him how this could be done. He told me that this transfer was not done as a rule, but he had become very friendly with a major who was going to make an exception in his case and let him transfer. Knowing Beverly, I went over to the Signal Corps Office and was told that they were crying for aviators, and if I could pass the physical test, they would be only too glad to transfer me. I talked it over with my Dad and could see the idea going through his mind. I had a bad case of asthma when I was young, and there had been a story in The Saturday Evening Post a month or so before about the physical examination a person had to take to become an aviator. Two tests I remember, sit on a stool facing a corner and they fire a pistol behind you, and then stick a needle in your side unexpectedly to get your reactions. I think that my Dad did not believe I could pass these tests, so he gave his consent wholeheartedly. I went over and took the test with two

other young men and passed the highest. Then to the recruiting sergeant for enlistment. When he came to the question, "Do you belong to any other branch of the service?" Of course I had to tell him of my enlistment in the Q.M. Corps. He told me that he could not enlist me in the Signal Corps until I was discharged from the QM. So I went upstairs to the Q.M. and asked for a discharge. "No, not till you are enlisted in the S.C." Back and forth and I finally gave up. Went home, and two weeks later I got a letter from the Signal Corps to come over and be enlisted as an Aviation Cadet in the Signal Enlisted Reserve Corps.

There were ten of us on a Tuesday, July 16, 1917, and when he came to the same question, I kept quiet, thinking they had fixed up my discharge. He then said that there were supposed to be twenty-five cadets assigned to Ground School at the University of California at Berkeley every Monday. The day before there were five short, so he would put all of our names in a hat, and the first five names he picked out would be ordered to active duty immediately and assigned to the Ground School at Berkeley. My name was the third one he picked. We were given five cents for the streetcar to the ferry and a ticket across the bay.

Just as I was to get on the car, I thought maybe I had better check on the discharge from the Q.M. Corps. I went up to the office and told the sergeant I had been enlisted in the S.C., and did he hit the ceiling. He called the sergeant at the Signal Office, raised hell with him and then told me that the last time I was in he had told me to come back in a couple of days and he would have the discharge papers all made out. He was a damn liar, but I did not argue with him for he had the papers on his desk and handed them to me. All set.

I reported to Ground School and was given a uniform and a campaign hat with a white band around it to show I was an Aviation Cadet. The only trouble with the white band was that the local boys told all the girls that the band indicated we had VD (venereal disease), and the girls would not date us. We were assigned to rooms in an apartment house off campus but within walking distance. The school was to last two months, later extended to three months. We were taught a little marching, the manual of the rifle, subjects connected with flying, AroGodamics (I mean dynamics), the Morse Code, radio, etc.

The instructor in radio was a very nice young gentleman. The day before the final examination he explained what a HELL of a job it was to grade the papers, terrible writing and so forth, would take him most of the night, and that a nice cigar would keep him relaxed. Of course, he got twenty-five boxes of cigars the next morning, and, of course, we all passed and were graduated from the Ground School.

Chapter Two

Then to Flying School, Rockwell Field, North Island, San Diego, California. Quartered in a tent with a wooden floor with three other cadets, we were told not to leave the Island. I was assigned to a civilian flying instructor named Mike Brown. On August 17, 1917, I reported to him at his plane, an 0X5 Jenny, with dual controls, a flying speed of about sixty miles per hour, a bi-plane with two seats, one behind the other and open cockpits. Mike Brown explained in detail the workings of the airplane and its controls. I was told to get in the rear seat and be sure to fasten the belt, to keep my hands and feet on the controls very lightly, and to follow through his moving of the controls. A few days later I took over the controls and apparently did OK, for after three hours, Mike climbed out and said that he had taught me all he could; for me to fly around alone and try not to kill myself; and to land close to him so that he would not have far to walk to tell me what I was doing wrong.

Four more hours of solo and I was graduated as an RMA (Reserve Military Aviator) with seven plus hours of flying. The regulations at that time were that as soon as you graduated from flying school, you would receive a commission as a First Lieutenant in the Aviation Section, Signal Reserve Corps and be ordered to active duty at once. This was later changed to a Second Lieutenant for those who graduated after December 23, 1917.

Of course, there was a foul up for twelve of us getting our commissions. As cadets, we were staying at Rockwell waiting for our commissions with nothing to do but a little flying once in a while, so I took a few days leave and went to my home in Oakland. Beverly Holmes was home on leave at the same time as a first lieutenant, BUT he had not transferred to the Aviation Section but to the Balloon Section. He had graduated from Fremont High School in Oakland, and he told me he was

going to make a speech to all the students in the auditorium on a certain day—the subject being his training as a lighter-than-air pilot. He asked me if I would give a talk on heavier-than-air training. This I refused, but did go out with a cousin of mine to hear Beverly's talk.

It was very interesting, going up in a captive balloon, observing action on the ground, adjusting field artillery firing, etc. He stated that before a student graduated he had to take a ride in a free balloon, a much smaller one than a captive balloon. He was up in one for about an hour and wanted to land, and forgetting he was in a smaller balloon, he opened the valve and held it open for some time to let a lot of air out. That, of course, caused the balloon to drop very fast, and as he was going to hit the ground very hard and might be killed, he threw out some of the ballast, and the balloon stopped very close to the ground. There was a very strong wind blowing. He could not land, and he was headed for a large group of trees. He knew that if he hit these trees, he would be killed, so he threw out the rest of the ballast. That got him above the trees, and he heaved a sigh of relief. Looking way ahead he saw some very tall trees that he would surely hit and be killed. There was no more ballast to throw out, so he took off all of his clothes, which was enough to get the balloon above these tall trees. Then he saw a small opening he thought he could land in, so he very carefully let out a small amount of air and made a good landing. He looked around and saw a few farmhouses with women running out to see what had happened, and here he was in the basket without any clothes on. He jumped out and ran back through the forest, picking up his clothes. I asked him afterwards if he thought the students would believe this story. It was 1917, and he thought at least half of them would.

Chapter Three

Back to Rockwell Field and a few more flying hours. Then in December 1917, I was one of twelve Flying Cadets ordered to Gerstner Field, Lake Charles, Louisiana. We were given a railroad ticket and fifteen cents a day coffee money. Upon reporting to Gerstner my name was up on the bulletin board as a first lieutenant and assigned as a primary flying instructor with only fourteen hours flying time. Later on, a cadet had to have two hundred hours flying time before he could graduate as an aviator. On my first instruction flight I saw a plane that had overshot one of the auxiliary fields and was in a ditch, with the pilot and student trying to pull it out. Thinking that we might be of some help, I instructed the student to make a turn and prepare to land. In making the turn we lost flying speed and crashed. Wrecked the plane, but no one was hurt. That ended my job as a flying instructor.

Oakland Airman Has Close Call in Fall

Lieutenant Harvey W. Prosser, son of G. S. Prosser, 2036 Twenty-third avenue, had a narrow escape from death recently when an aeroplane in which he was flying at North island took a tail-spin and crashed to earth. There was a high wind and this, combined with a missing valve, sufficed to cause the accident.

Neither Prosser nor his companion were injured with the exception of a few scratches. Lieutenant Prosser expects to be sent to France within a short time.

In the meantime, the twelve cadets were called to headquarters to receive their commissions as first lieutenants. They handed out the commission paper to everyone but me. Oh, God! I had not received any mail. My name had been up on the bulletin board as lieutenant, and an officer told me that in the of-

ficers' room at headquarters there was a mailbox with my name on it—Lieutenant. I went into the adjutant, and he looked things up and found out that about three weeks before, a telegram had arrived giving me a commission as a first lieutenant and had been sent over to the Commandant of Cadets who was told to look me up as soon as I arrived. He had the initials of the commandant who had received the message. I went over to his office and saw the telegram on the top of his desk. I asked him about it, and he said that he had never received the message or he would have acted on it as soon as possible. I told him they had his initials in the message book; he did not remember signing it. I pointed to the telegram on the top of his desk, and was his face red. It meant about a thousand files in rank to me.

I was then assigned to the First Pursuit School to be held in the United States. Major "Bill" Ocker was in command of this school. We had the normal ground instructions on flying combat and then started flying Hiso-Jennies. These had a hisosapno motor with more horsepower and a little faster than the OX-5. We then graduated to the Thomas-Morse Scout, a signal tested scout plane with a Gnome rotary engine. The propeller was attached to the cylinder and rotated with the engine. Only one control of the engine, a button on the top of the control stick. Push the button and the engine would stop completely; otherwise, the engine was wide open all the time. In coming in for a landing you would have to push the button and release it all the way up to the parking area, then cut the engine. We were warned that the engine had the habit of catching on fire every once in awhile when you pushed the button to stop it, and the only way to put out the fire was to open the engine wide and run it for awhile. I was about three thousand feet on a rather hazy day and wanted to land, so I cut the engine, and a big blue flame shot out of it. My God! No parachutes! I opened it wide and when I got my nerve back, cut the engine again and still the big blue flame. Then I realized it was the sun shining through the haze on the revolving propeller that was causing the blue light. How nice. I made a good landing.

Major "Bill" Ocker was quite a character. One of the students landed and told him the aileron wires were loose on the Jenny he was flying. "Oh, hell. You don't need any ailerons." He called for a pair of wire cutters, cut the aileron control wire and

took off, flying around the field and making a perfect landing, just to prove he was right.

We were supposed to do our flying in the morning after a couple hours of instruction, and the cleanup of the aeroplanes in the afternoons. We did our cleaning job and were sitting around talking over the morning's flights, when the Major walked in and asked us why we were not working. We told him we thought the planes looked pretty good. He strolled around looking them over and came back. "Yes, they do look good, but I tell you what you do. Let the air out of the tires and pump them up again just for the experience." Finally graduated as a Pursuit Pilot.

There was a second lieutenant stationed there who was very shy and bashful. He met a young lady at a dance on the post one evening and got up the courage to ask if he could call on her. They made a date to go for an auto ride the next Sunday. No car, so he hired one. Went out to her home and found she was alone with a five year-old niece, and would it be all right to take her along with them. Oh, he was only too glad, as long as he could be with her. About an hour or two later, the little girl looked up at her aunt and said, "Aunty, I have to wee wee." Well, he did not know what to do, so just kept on driving. A short time later, the little girl said in a very pleading voice, "Aunty, I have to WEE WEE." Well, he knew everyone has to once in awhile, and children have a hard time holding it, so as he drove by a clump of brush, he stopped. Nothing was said, and the girl and her niece got out of the car and went behind the brush. When they got back in the car, there was a little, embarrassed silence. He did not know how to start the conversation again. Then the little girl looked at him and said, "Ohoo, Aunty wee weed, too."

There was a Captain John Doe stationed on the Field who got mixed up with a civilian flying instructor's wife. The husband had a slight accident and was in the hospital for about two weeks. How nice! The doctor was going to release him, but the wife talked him into another two weeks. (More of Captain Doe later.)

One of the very infrequent accidents in student instruction was that the student would get very tense and freeze the controls so hard that the instructor could not move them. It is believed that this happened to one of the best instructors, a little older than the others. It was seen that the plane got in a

steep nosedive and no action was taken to try to pull out of it. The instructor was killed, and the student received a fractured neck.

One of my Ground School friends, Harold McKnight, was detailed to instruct the students how to side-slip a plane if they were coming in for a landing a little too fast. The students were not doing so well, so he told them he would show them how it should be done. He side slipped right into the ground and wrecked the plane. Was his face RED!

Chapter Four

Then a group of the officers who had graduated from the First Pursuit School were ordered to the Gunnery School at Seifridge Field, Mt. Clements, Michigan. Still flying HysoJennies with a Lewis machine gun mounted on the rim of the rear cockpit with a revolving mount. We would fire on targets on a lake nearby.

A civilian pilot flew in at the controls of a new aeroplane, a Dehavilen, LM-4, and demonstrated its capabilities. We were all very impressed by it.

Selfridge Field was a very enjoyable station with smaller towns around, so the social life with the nice young ladies who were very impressed with the good-looking aviator who would probably be overseas in a short time and, of course, shot down in combat. A Lieutenant Bealmer and I met two very charming girls from Detroit, and we invited them out to lunch on a Sunday. Much to our surprise, one of them brought her mother and father with her. After lunch we showed them around the field and explained the workings of the aeroplanes. Remember, this was early 1918. One of them asked if we ever ran out of gasoline while flying. Lt. Bealmer was quick on the uptake and said that to run out of gas was very dangerous, for if you did, the engine would stop, of course, and the propeller. When the propeller stopped, there was no way of getting down. Just last week he was flying about three thousand feet high, when he saw an old model of a plane up ahead of him. When he got close to it, he saw that there were two skeletons in the cockpits—probably ran out of gasoline six months ago and could not get down. They thought that something should be done about that, and Bealmer told them there was an engineering depot out of Detroit that believed they had solved the problem. Then one of them asked if you ever had a puncture in the air. Bealmer told them that this was quite a common occurrence; that just a

few days ago he had a tire blow out and it blew the plane over on its back; that he had a hard time getting the plane right side up again; then ruined both stories by saying he had to land on a cloud and fix the tire.

One of the officers crashed a plane near a small town close by. One of the men who saw it asked the pilot if he had to land that way every time he landed. Another asked him how he was going to get the plane back to Selfridge, and he told him that he had telephoned for the balloon, and that was going to take him home.

Captain John Doe arrived for duty at Selfridge and became the only captain on the base. Major "Bo" Lackland was in command of the field, and he was going to recommend that all first lieutenants be promoted to captains. Our friend talked him out of it for fear someone better than he was would take over his job. How nice of the SO and SO.

There were three or four Flight Surgeons at Selfridge Field, and they put their heads together and figured out a way to see how high a pilot could fly before he would pass out for lack of oxygen. The system was installed, and all of the pilots were notified they would have to take this rebreather test, as it was called. Of course that worried us all for fear we would not be able to pass this test, so we all behaved ourselves for at least a month before our turn came.

The equipment was a table with an upright board at the rear edge with two rows of six lights installed on the face of it and corresponding screw heads on the table in front of the pilot sitting in a chair. When one of the white lights would go on, he was supposed to touch the corresponding screw head with an electric pencil he had in his hand. If he hit the screw head right, the light would go out; if he missed, the light would turn red. Then there was a dial on the back board with a pointer on it that the doctors could move around. The pilot was supposed to keep this pointer at the number six by moving the arm of a rheostat connected with the dial and located on the table in front of him. Then there was an electric motor under the table that you had to keep running at a certain speed by two pedals worked by his feet. All of this time the pilot was breathing the air out of a small tank through a hose to his mouth with his nose closed off. The doctors were checking all the time—pulse, blood pressure,

etc. Just before you passed out for lack of oxygen, they would release you. I took this test, and a few days later, I got a letter stating that I was not to fly above five thousand feet or I would pass out. I sure wish I had saved that letter.

It was my turn to demonstrate the art of flying at a Red Cross drive. It was to be at Yale, Michigan, about ninety miles away. The local citizens would have a field picked out for me to land on with a marker on it. Remember, this was early 1918. I finally found the town and circled it a couple of times trying to find the field. I finally saw some horses and buggies and autos going into a large clump of trees. I flew over the trees and right in the middle there was a marker on a… I can't say field, for it was about a hundred feet square. I did find a nice, large, level field and landed close to the trees. The crowd came rushing over with a young man in a Master Boy Scout uniform. He took over, putting a rope around the plane with a Boy Scout holding it about every five feet. The mechanic showed the plane off to one person at a time, letting each one climb into the front cockpit and explaining the controls. I was talking with the scoutmaster, a Mr. George Van---, deciding the schedule of events. I was to fly that afternoon, doing a few stunts; a little party that night; and flying the next morning.

The next morning I took George for a flight and then took the mechanic to do some more stunts. It was a rather hot day. I took off, banked rather steeply to come back over the spectators, when I hit a downdraft and could not pull out of the side slip the plane had gotten into. Crashed about a hundred feet away from the crowd. They say I was in a Mess of a Hell, the engine sitting on my lap, my face badly cut and bleeding quite a bit, and it looked as though I had a broken leg. They had more trouble with ladies fainting than they did with me. I was unconscious, and by the time they got the engine off my lap, they found that my leg was not broken.

The next thing I knew was that I was in a bed, and the doctors were arguing about how many more stitches to put under my chin. Two weeks later I was feeling pretty good, so thought I had better report back to Selfridge. George had to borrow six dollars to hire a car to drive me back. As we got on the base, I noticed a few friends looking at me in a rather startled manner. I reported to the Commanding Officer, Major "Bo" Lackland,

who looked at me and said, "What the hell are you doing back here? The last report we had on you was that you had both legs broken and fifty stitches taken in your face." He did welcome me back though. I met some other officers, and they looked at me as though I was a ghost. The first report they had received was that the mechanic and I had been killed instantly, and they had started to collect two dollars apiece for my flowers. I then took a month's leave and spent it with my parents in Oakland.

Upon returning to Detroit on a Friday afternoon, I joined the usual weekend party at the Statler Hotel. I arrived at Selfridge about 2:00 a.m., Monday, and after a rather restless night, I reported in and found my name on the bulletin board to take the Rebreather Test at nine o'clock. Oh, God! After a weekend like that! But orders are orders. I went through it again, and they told me that I had reached the highest altitude of any pilot up to that time. The Bootleggers sure cleaned up.

In the summer of 1918, the wish of so many of us came true. A group of us were ordered to the Concentration Camp at Garden City, New York, to await shipment overseas. We were formed into groups of one hundred with a captain in command. My Old Friend, Captain Doe, was in charge of the hundred I was in, and we were assigned to a boat sailing on a certain day. But, come to find out that Captain McClellan, who was in charge of the hundred which were to take the next boat after we departed, was rather aggressive and talked the Transportation Officer into letting his group take the boat we had been as-

signed to. They went over to Paris and stayed two weeks, and the Armistice was signed. I wondered why the change of boats.

I was sitting just inside the revolving door of one of the hotels in New York City when I saw a taxi stop and Captain Doe get out. He turned to help his girlfriend from Gerstner Field out, and she started through the door while the captain paid the driver and got the baggage. She saw me sitting there, kept on going around the door, said something to him, and they got in the taxi and drove off. No wonder he let them switch boats on us. I saw him out at camp the following week and asked him if he didn't like that hotel last Saturday. He looked at me and said that he had not been in New York City that day. He was a captain, and I was only a lieutenant. I did call him a God Damn Liar, but only in my mind.

Chapter Five

I was ordered to Brindly Field, located on the east end of Long Island. Of course, not much to do. A group of us went through target practice with a 45 pistol. I became an Expert. Of course, with not much to do, we spent a lot of time in New York City. A friend of mine and I went to the big city to see the sights and sounds on New Year's Eve. We started at The Astor Hotel where we met a very charming young lady who seemed to be rather lonesome. We got talking, and she asked us if we knew of another girl who could join us for the evening. Not having one, she said that she would try to find one. She came back with another very good-looking young lady. We toured the city and ended up at the first girl's apartment quite late. A very nice two-bedroom place. Before I could get to sleep, the other officer came in and said that his girl would not go to bed with him unless he gave her some money, and he could not find his wallet. It seemed that my girl did not know the girl had taken both of our wallets and hid them. She gave this other officer twenty dollars, and from then on a very enjoyable night and a fine breakfast the next morning.

We finally got back to Brindly, and I found orders for me to report to Rockwell Field, San Diego, California. How nice! My home state. I went to my last girl friend's place and told her of my orders, and she gave me rather a strange look. Then she said that she had always wanted to visit California, and that if it was all right with me, she would take a month's vacation and go out with me for the month—all at her own expense, well, what do you know. As I said, she was a Very Nice person, so why not, we agreed on the day, train and time.

I went back to the field, and on the morning of the day I was supposed to leave, took my last flight with a strange captain in the rear cockpit. It was a rather hazy day, but we both wanted to see the troop ship that was stuck on Fire Island at

the end of Long Island, It was a rather interesting flight, but I finally realized it was getting late so I gave it full gun back to the field. It was in the wintertime, and we had to cool the engine off by letting it idle after we taxied to the parking space. I explained this to the captain, climbed out of the front cockpit, turned backwards, stepped onto the wheel, bent way over to get under a wire running from the front of the engine to the wing, and as I got through, it seemed as though someone stepped up and hit me in the ribs and knocked me down. I tried to get up, but my side hurt me so, I looked around and found out that the propeller had hit me. If I had been going forwards, it would have hit my neck and cut my head off.

They took me by ambulance to the hospital at the Overseas Concentration Carp and found I had a cracked left hip bone. I called my girlfriend. She was home, packed with her tickets, just waiting for me and sounded very disappointed. Six weeks later, when I got out of the hospital, work had picked up at the office, and she could not get away. God acts in strange ways.

After six weeks in the hospital with eighteen inches of adhesive tape wrapped around my hips, the doctors said that I could be released, but recommended that I go to the Air Corps rest camp in upper New York just across the valley from that famous girls' school, Vasser College. How nice; But I still had my orders for Rockwell and was afraid that if I delayed much longer, these orders might be changed. So I turned that down. The doctor did tell me, though, that if my hip hurt me on the way out, to stop off at some town and rest up. It took me a month to reach San Diego. It might have taken me longer, but I was having breakfast at a cafe in Salt Lake City when I read that the Air Corps was forming four flying circuses—north, east, south and west. The west one was going to organize at Rockwell, so I hopped on a train and beat it west, but was too late.

Chapter Six

The aeroplanes on the Western Flying Circus were HysoJennies with not too long a flying range, so a train was hired, including flatcars, passenger, sleeping and dining cars. The aeroplanes were dismantled, tied down on the flatcars, and reassembled at the next stop. Of course, after each aerial show at each town; there was a party thrown for the group, and a good time was had by all. I think Major Carl Spatz was in command, and at one of the larger towns he knew a rather large party was going to be held. The next stop was just a short trip away, and they were scheduled to put on a show at nine the next morning. Knowing some of his officers, the Major talked with the engineer of the train and got him to schedule the departure time at six o'clock, and as it would only take a few hours to get to the next town, for him to find a siding where he could pull off and park for about five hours. How mean can some people get? Maybe better than a hangover pilot getting killed.

There was very little duty at Rockwell, but to let us know we were still in the Army, we were assigned to Guard Duty. I was guarding a group of aeroplanes with a rifle over my shoulder when a dense fog came in. I was passing one plane when I thought I saw a man come out of the fog. "Halt! Who goes there?" With the rifle at the ready, I walked up to him, and here it was a six-foot ladder. Scared hell out of me. Next time around the same man came out, so I went over and pushed the step ladder over.

We did have one other duty that was very pleasant—entertaining the young ladies of San Diego. There was a group of about six of us living in one of the less expensive hotels with an automobile ferry over to Coranado and a bridge over to Rockwell.

Chapter Seven

Finally the Air Corps found out a way to keep us busy. The Border Patrol along the entire boundary between the United States and Mexico, from Brownsville on the Gulf of Mexico to San Diego, to try to stop the cattle rustling into Mexico and the smuggling into the U.S.A. A squadron comprised of about twenty-five officers and three hundred enlisted men was organized at Rockwell by a Captain Clements McMullen who, of course, picked all of his friends and the best of the enlisted men. I was lucky to be one of his friends at that time. The enlisted men were ordered to Kelly Field, Texas, about two weeks before the officers. When we arrived at Kelly, we found out that they had split the enlisted men in two groups, assigned them to two other squadrons, and assigned the officers to other outfits. Was there hell raised, but it did not do a bit of good.

I was finally ordered to the 20th Aero Squadron, 1st Surveillance Group, El Paso, Texas. Our flying field was the parade ground of the Seventh Cavalry stationed at Fort Bliss. We patrolled the border from Marfa in the east to Douglas, Arizona, in the west. At that time Poncho Villa was mad at Columbus, New Mexico. He had given one of his officers five thousand dollars some time in the past to buy supplies in the U.S.A. This officer deserted and bought a store in Columbus, and every time Villa started a revolution he would head for Columbus.

About the time of our arrival at El Paso, Villa was on a rampage, and the Command Office of the Army at Columbus Barracks thought he was headed that way. He asked the commander of the 20th Squadron if he would send a plane to patrol the Border just south of his command for a couple of days. Lieutenant LeRoy Wolf as pilot and lieutenant George Usher as observer were sent on this mission. I was sent there two days later to relieve Wolf. There was no plane on the field, and when I landed was told that they had taken off for Douglas that

morning, but would return in time for Wolf to get to El Paso. They had not shown up by late afternoon, so I called the field at Douglas, and they had not landed there. So, of course, we figured they had a forced landing somewhere in between. I said I would fly out early in the morning and search from Columbus west, and they could search to the east. Three hours after takeoff in the morning and sighting no plane, I passed over the field at Douglas and saw all the planes on the ground, so knew Wolf and Usher had been found. I landed with about a cupful of gasoline left. They had been found about a hundred miles in Mexico.

The story goes that the C.O. at Columbus Barracks had asked them if they would fly into Mexico and try to find how far Villa was below the Border. That, of course, was absolutely against regulations—to go into a foreign country during hostilities. They got lost, ran out of gasoline, landed in a level field with only one tree in it, and, of course, hit the tree with one wing. There was a Union Oil Company truck loaded with gas passing the field. They were taken into custody by some Mexican soldiers and held under guard. The Mexican government demanded five thousand dollars for their release. This money was appropriated by Congress, and they were released. Lieutenants Wolf and Usher were court martialed for being in a foreign country during hostilities and found not guilty. Of course, no mention was made of the colonel commanding Columbus Barracks asking them to fly into this foreign country.

Then Flight 'A' of the 12th Aero Squadron of which I was a member was ordered to Nogales, Arizona, with all of our planes and equipment. Lieutenant "Bob" Knapp was post exchange officer at the field at Fort Bliss, and he had a beautiful female cat to help keep the mice away. He took the cat, very pregnant, with him in the plane, hoping she would not have the kittens while in the air. She did, and Bob was asked by some eastern magazine to take a picture of the cat. It received quite a write-up. The first birth in the air.

We did have parachutes by this time, and Lieutenant Wolf wanted to make a free jump. To give one of the kittens more publicity, he was going to wrap one of them in the small pilot chute, the one that is ejected when the rope is pulled and pulls out the large chute. Well, poor old Wolfy was rather ner-

vous, and he wrapped the small chute tightly around the kitten. When he threw it overboard, of course, the chute did not unwrap, so the poor kitten hit the ground and was killed. People in town, knowing of Wolf's jump, thought it was his parachute that did not open. He made a most perfect landing in front of a small crowd of spectators.

A few weeks later there was a small convention in town, and I decided I would show off to the crowd by making a free jump. I used two parachutes, one on the back and one on the chest. Lieutenant Bob Knapp was my pilot, and at four thousand feet, we figured where I should jump according to the wind so that I would land right in front of the spectators. I had never practiced getting out of the rear cockpit with two large packs on, and by the time I was out, standing with one foot in the step, we were way beyond where I had planned to jump. So Bob made a large circle with me looking down four thousand feet. If it had not been the razzing I would get from the other officers and the disappointment of the crowd, I would have climbed right back in the plane. When in position again, I did jump, counted ten and pulled the rip cord. They said I fell about two hundred and fifty feet before the chute opened. I do not remember that, but after the chute opened, it was the most beautiful sensation. Higher than any of the surrounding hills, quiet, and no sensation of falling at all; just hanging in the air. At about a thousand feet I pulled the rip cord of the other chute, which really made a wonderful sight, the two chutes bumping together, and, of course, it reduced my rate of fall. I was facing a light breeze which was blowing one backwards, yet almost retained a standing position when I hit the ground.

Some months later, I was flying over the Davis Mountains just north of Marfa, Texas, at about five thousand feet, when the engine would not pick up. There was no level ground to land on, so I unbuckled my belt and with no fear like I had when I made the free jump, put one leg over the side and was ready to go, when the engine seemed to pick up a little. I got back in and fought it out till I reached the landing field at Marfa. I was really surprised at the different sensation between a free jump and one where you knew it was the only thing to do or crash.

The Twenty-fifth Infantry Regiment (Colored) was

stationed at Nogales, and when our Flight arrived, we were attached to this regiment. All white officers. I met a Captain George McDonal, who was in command of one of the companies, and he assigned one of his enlisted men as my orderly. All of the air officers were assigned quarters on the base. I had a married set with a maid's room, and this orderly spent all of his time with me. He would know what condition I would arrive home in late at night and have the right kind of drink and food ready for my breakfast. How nice—just a first lieutenant. I had never seen, up till this time nor did I see in the future, such a well-trained company of soldiers. There was a group of about ten of them with a sergeant in charge who were considered outstanding in marching maneuvers and the manual of the rifle. This group demonstrated their abilities at military meetings all over the United States.

The Commanding Officer, Colonel Carnahan, held a reveille every Saturday morning when he would pick the most outstanding soldier in dress and appearance as his office orderly for the following week. Each company would decide which of their men would compete for this honor, dress him up and carry him down to his place in the line so that he would not get any dust on his shoes.

Colonel Carnahan was rather a strict disciplinarian. He issued an order that a pilot could not fly to any other town without his permission, except on patrol. Bob Knapp and I took off in two planes one day for a flight to Tucson, Arizona, without his OK. I was getting a twenty-five cent haircut, when a terrific wind and rain storm passed over. Bob came in and said that a man had passed the field where our planes were, and the wind had wrecked both of them. We went out and one plane was right on top of the other just like a man and wife in bed. Oh, God! Wait till the Old Man hears about this. We assessed the damage and phoned the Chief Engineer at our field in Nogales, telling him what we needed. He left about nine that evening with three other mechanics and had us in the air about nine the next morning with no one the wiser, we hoped.

The officers of the Twenty-fifth at Nogales and those of the Eighth Cavalry at Douglas, Arizona, had baseball teams and used to play back and forth every so often. The game was to be played on a Saturday at Douglas that year, and most of

the officers had to take a six a.m. train out of Nogales. I was not on the team but wanted to see the game that Saturday, so I asked Captain McDonald to fly there with me. We had lunch at the Officer's Club and then got in the Air Corps Dodge touring car and drove out to the flying field which was a few miles out of town. It seemed that Colonel Carnahan was gone that weekend, and a major had taken over. We later heard that he saw us leave, went to another window and saw we were going out to the field. Well, when we got there, the sergeant on guard met us and said that the major had called, and we were to call him before we took off. We kind of had an idea that something was wrong and almost told the sergeant to call the major and tell him we had taken off before he had a chance to tell us. BUT we knew the major, so called him, and he asked me if I was going to fly Captain Mc to Douglas. Of course, I had to tell him I was, and he told me that it was absolutely against regulations to fly an officer of another branch of the service without permission, and he confined us both to the post till we reported to the colonel on his return. This we did the next Monday, and he said it was against regulations to fly Captain Mc (I had never heard of this), but, of course, I could not argue with him. He confined us to the post for thirty days. I asked him what we were being confined for. "By God, flying an officer of another branch without permission." "But, sir," I said, "we did not even get off the ground." He looked at us in rather a disgusted manner and said, "By God, I'll get you for the intention; thirty days on the post." Captain Mc had to spend most of the time on the post, but my duties required me to fly the border, and once in a while I would extend the patrol to El Paso.

We understood that The Old Man was quite considerate and released all prisoners at half time. He saw all prisoners Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. After fifteen days we went to the adjutant's office and asked to see the Colonel. He went into The Old Man's room right next door and said, "Captain McDonald and Lieutenant Prosser desire to see the Colonel." He replied, "Oh, hell, send the God damn jailbirds in." Of course, we were released from the confinement. We thanked him, saluted and just as we were going out the door, he remarked, "Well, my boys, I hated to do it, but I had to."

I was dating a very charming young lady who was liv-

ing with her grandmother, a rather religious, elderly lady, and I took her for a flight on her sixty-first birthday. She stated after we landed that the higher we flew closer to heaven, she began thinking of God and humming hymns. Of course, I took the young lady for a little longer flight.

There was going to be quite a party at the Officer's Club on a Friday evening. I had some good contacts in Juarez, Mexico, just across the border from El Paso. Seeing I had to fly our C.O. to El Paso and return Friday, I was asked to bring back a case of whiskey. The conference took longer than planned, and I did not get started on the return flight till about two o'clock the day of the party. It took about three hours flying time from El Paso to Nogales, so we generally stopped and refueled at Douglas. This time I knew if we did that, I would have to spend the night and miss the party, for we had no night flying equipment at that time, so I took a straight course passing Douglas about five miles to the north. Of course, the evening breeze came up against us, and I knew we could not make it. Fort Huachuca was directly ahead of us, and I cut the motor and asked Captain Turpin where the field was. He told me that it was just a small field with the rocks cleared from the field piled up around the edge of the field; that I could not find it for it was getting dark and there was no possibility of locating the small space; that we had better go back to the well-known field at Douglas. Just as we reached the outskirts of town, I ran out of gasoline. I had been in a glide heading for the landing field, so was pretty close to the ground and saw a roadway that I thought I might land on. I skidded around but could not straighten up out of the skid and knew I would crash if I tried to land on the road, so I straightened out, pulled up a little to miss the fence that I knew must be there and made a good landing in the dark on an open field. I stopped rolling, no brake, and kind of heaved a sigh of release. The next morning, after filling the tank with gas, I could not find a long enough stretch to take off. The field was covered with small mounds about two feet high. How the hell I landed in the dark without hitting one of them, God only knows. Of course, by curving around a couple of mounds, I was able to take off. Back to Nogales and got hell from the other officers for not returning in time for the party.

All of the Air Corps officers at Nogales were Reserve

Officers, and in the summer of 1920, we were invited to join the regular army. Those who filled the application were ordered to Arcadia, California, to take the examination. I was driving a 1914 Stutz Roadster at the time and took another officer with me. Captain Turpin was driving an old Case car, and he invited three other officers to go with him. His wife had gone out by train two weeks before. The roads in Arizona in those days were really something. I say roads; there weren't any roads, just dry creek beds, sandy ruts, etc. When we reached California, the roads were wonderful—paved and what have you. Just as I drove onto this nice paved highway, I saw two motorcycle policemen chasing a large Cadillac. I thought there certainly wouldn't be three policemen along that stretch of road, so I stepped on it. I got up to about eighty, when sure enough there was the third policeman. He stopped me and asked me what my hurry was. I told him that I was almost out of gasoline and wanted to reach Los Angeles before I ran out. He told me that wasn't good enough; I would have to have a better story. I made out thinking a little, then told him that if he had driven over the terrible roads in Arizona that I had, and then had gotten on the beautiful concrete highways in California, he would not blame me for stepping on it a little. "Oh,'" he said, "that is much better," and did not give me a ticket. We talked a few minutes, and I told him about Captain Turpin and the other officers in an old Case car, and, just for fun, if he saw them driving below the speed limit, to stop them for blocking traffic, and of course, if he was speeding to stop him. He smiled and said he sure would. Turpin had a lot of tire trouble and did not get to Los Angeles till one o'clock in the morning, so they were not stopped.

The examination was rather simple and only took about a day. All the other officers took the train back, and I planned to drive at night on account of the extreme heat. Captain Turpin asked me to drive along with him in case he had any trouble, I told him I was going to drive at night, but his wife was afraid to do this, so he, being my commanding officer, I had to drive during the day. Was that something—across the desert in the middle of summer. I would get quite a way in front of him, find a shady spot, and wait for him. I came to a small store with a windmill and a water tank in back of it. Two or three old men were sitting in the shade on the porch. I stopped and asked

them if they had anything cool to drink. "Oh, yes. The water coming down from the tank was fairly cool." Before I got to the corner of the store, one of them yelled at me, "Watch out you don't burn your lips." I was glad he warned me. We made the trip OK with no motor trouble with either car.

My friend, George McDonald, and I wanted to take a little leave, so we decided to drive to Los Angeles in my car by way of the Grand Canyon. It was later in the year and much cooler. We spent one night in an open field and arrived at the El Tovar Hotel at the Grand Canyon about six, looking like Hell in army fatigues, dirty from working on the car. We looked through the glass door, and everyone was sitting around in formal dress. We finally got up the nerve to go in and register. Were told the dining hail closed in about fifteen minutes. We went down to the men's room and cleaned up as well as we could and started into the dining room. The headwaiter came up to us and said, "I think you gentlemen would look much better if you had dinner jackets on," and that if we went to the desk, they would give us one. Sure enough, we got two black alpaca dinner jackets, put them on and went in. You can imagine how we looked among all the other people in formal clothes. The next morning we came down in uniform looking like a million.

There was a train from Los Angeles that arrived at nine o'clock in the morning and left at nine in the evening. We met two very charming young ladies who had arrived on this train, escorted them around showing them the sights, and put them on the train in the evening. Mac stepped inside the platform door, and I was on the outside. The conductor called "All aboard." I kissed my girl good-by and got off. The train started with Mac and his girl just one form inside. I jumped on and asked him if he was going by train to L.A, or by car. He looked up with a start, ran and got off. He remarked, "By God, if I had stayed on that train a second longer, I would have never got off."

We went on to Los Angeles, went broke, had to sell the car for six hundred dollars, got three hundred in cash (enough for train fare), and never heard from the chap again. It sure was a wonderful month; a lot of FUN.

The town of Nogales was rather small in 1919 and 1920, so I got to meet most of the VIPS residing there: a Mr. Bowman, who owned a bank; Joe McIntyre, a cashier in the bank; and

a Taylor Wilkie, who had a garage in town. About the second week I was in town, he told me he and some others were going to the Empire Ranch about fifty miles east. It consisted of about a million acres of land and was managed by a Mr. Banning Vail, whose family owned a lot of ranches in California.

They always had a good time, a wee bit of drinking and so forth, and why didn't I fly up on Sunday. He told me how to find it, and they would have a landing field picked out with a large cross on it. Well, I flew up and found the house but no landing field. Circled the house, and they all staggered out and put a cross on a very small field right behind the house. It was TOO small, so I found a beautiful field about a mile away and landed. They all came over, and Banning told me that he would have the small brush cleared out and that would be my private landing field. I spent a lot of time at this ranch. Banning gave me a horse, and I rode with him on a lot of his inspection trips.

Banning and his wife had two children, a girl about five and a boy about three. The first time I took my girlfriend from Nogales to the ranch for the weekend, there were plenty of rooms which we occupied separately. The next morning at breakfast, the little girl asked her mother why Nellie and I did not sleep together like you and dad do. I used to fly up there from El Paso quite often. When I was transferred to El Paso, Banning wanted to ship the horse to me. I did not expect to be in El Paso long, so much to my disappointment, I had to refuse the gift.

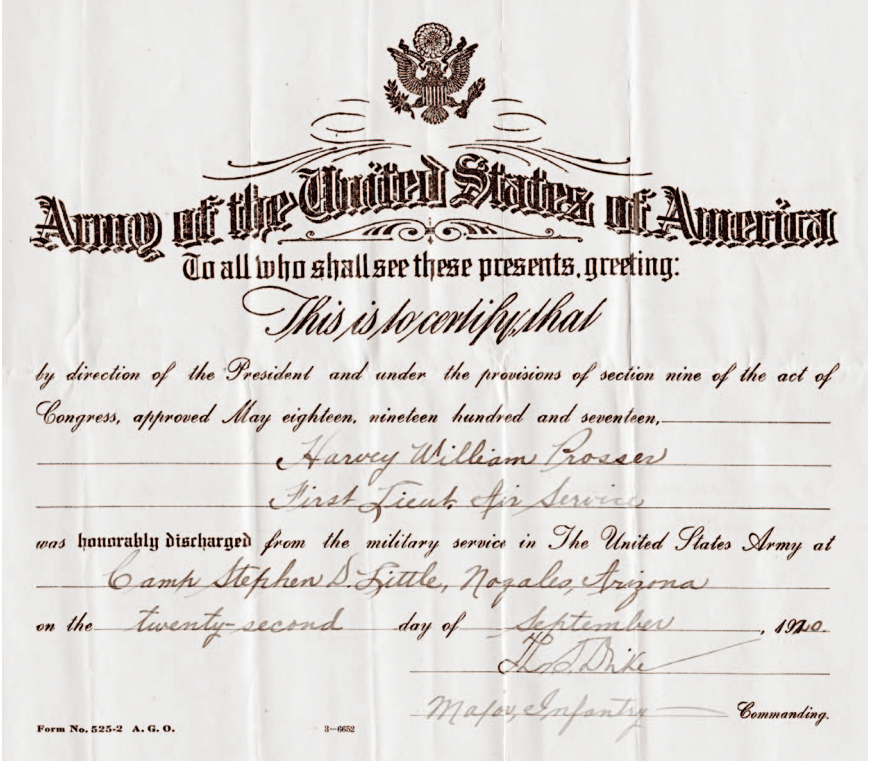
I was at the ranch when a plane from Rockwell Field with a pilot and a General as a passenger was lost on their way to Fort Huachuca. One of the ranchers reported to Banning Vail that he had seen a fire on the east slopes of the mountains just south of Tucson the morning after the disappearance of the plane. That was right on their route, so I trucked the horse to this ranch and spent two days searching the area where the rancher said he had seen the fire. Slept out in a bedroll all night. No fire.

Lieutenant Ned Schamm was assigned to search the area around Tucson with two other planes. One evening while in Tucson, a rural mailman told him that on that day he was driving a car up on the western slope of this range of mountains and heard a plane overhead. They searched this area very thor-

oughly, but no wreck. They landed close to a small town near the border, walked into town, and enquired from people if they had heard a plane in the air that day. A school teacher said she had. They were on recess, and the children called attention to a plane flying very low towards the town; so low it almost hit the flagpole. Ned asked her how the motor sounded. "Oh," she said, "we did not hear the motor at all." Ned checked up later and found out that there had not been a plane in the air in the state of Arizona that day. The imagination of some people.

Some time in 1921 I received a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the regular Army Signal Corps. A month later, I was promoted to a First Lieutenant. How nice!

Finally the Border Patrol was terminated, and both Flights "A" and "B" of the 12th Aero Squadron from Nogales and Douglas were ordered back to Fort Bliss, Texas.



Army of the United States of America

To all who shall see these presents, greeting:

This is to certify that

by direction of the President and under the provisions of section nine of the act of Congress, approved May eighteen, nineteen hundred and seventeen,

Harvey William Prosser

First Lieut. Air Service

was honorably discharged from the military service in The United States Army at

Camp Stephen D. Little, Nogales, Arizona

on the twenty-second day of September, 1920.

H. A. Dike

Major, Infantry Commanding.

Form No. 525-2 A. G. O. 3—6652

WAR DEPARTMENT

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE SPECIAL DELIVERY LETTER. **O.**

201(Prosser, Harvey William) Off. WASHINGTON September 16, 1920.
EAB -EAI - 596.

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O

Subject: Appointment of xx

FILE
10/29/20
Executive
Personnel
acy-ce
Training

To: Commanding Officer,
United States Troops,
Nogales, Arizona.

1. Advise First Lieutenant Harvey William Prosser, Air Service that he is appointed Second Lieutenant, Air Service, Regular Army, with rank from July 1, 1920.

2. If he is willing to accept the appointment, honorably discharge him at once from his emergency commission, and direct him to fill out the inclosed form of acceptance and forward it without delay directly to The Adjutant General of the Army. The acceptance will be dated and signed *on day following his discharge.*

3. Your order discharging the officer will state that he is "Discharged to accept an appointment in the Regular Army." The same notation will be made on Report of Casualty forwarded by the personnel adjutant to The Adjutant General of the Army, reporting the separation of the officer from the service. None of the reports and forms enumerated in Circular No. 204, War Department, June 4, 1920, is required to accompany the Report of Casualty in this case. These instructions supersede paragraph 2, Circular No. 278, War Department, July 17, 1920, which has been rescinded.

4. Notify the officer that he is not entitled to bonus nor to travel pay on discharge. Pay under new appointment will commence with date of acceptance.

5. The oath of office will not be executed until receipt of commission accompanied by Form No. 337-A, A. G. O.

6. Direct this officer to report to you for duty, granting him such delay in reporting as you may deem necessary, not exceeding fourteen days. The delay will be in the interest of the public service and will be so stated in your order. (See par. 70, A. R.)

7. If the officer is not willing to accept the appointment, direct him to forward his declination by special delivery mail directly to The Adjutant General of the Army, using the inclosed form for the purpose, within forty-eight hours of the receipt by him of notice of appointment. In this event action will be taken by you as prescribed in paragraph 4, Circular No. 229, War Department, June 18, 1920.

By order of the Secretary of War:

Clift Andrus.
Adjutant General.

A true copy.

The officer accepted the appointment on Sept 23, *1920.*

Chief of Air Service

Adjutant General.

A. 1.c.

cd 10-29-20.

Chapter Eight

Our duties at Fort Bliss were rather varied, working as observers for the Cavalry, ferrying old DH's from the Border Patrol bases to El Paso and then to the Engineering and Supply Depot at Duncan Field, San Antonio, Texas.

On one of my trips from an outlying base to our field at Fort Bliss, I came in for the landing in a very strong westerly wind, so had to keep the engine about half throttle to make any headway, and headed toward the hangars where other planes were tied down. All of a sudden the wind switched 180 degrees blowing me right into the other planes. There was no chance of my giving it the gun and going around again, so in I went, right into two other planes. Major Walton, the C.O., came out to investigate, and I told him what seemed to happen. He looked at the wind sock that showed there was a very strong wind from the west and that I had headed right into it. As we were walking away, I looked up at the wind sock and the wind was blowing 180 degrees from what it had been. He remarked that my story seemed to be right. That was wrecked planes for me—four, five and six.

One of the outstanding officers of the Seventh Cavalry stationed at Fort Bliss was Colonel Tommy Tompkins. He had been born and raised in the Seventh Cavalry, finally being made the Commanding Officer. One of his main features was his eight-inch gray mustache. In passing in review, leading his regiment before the Commanding General Officer and his staff or visiting VIP's, first in a walk, then in a trot, and finally at a gallop, the long flowing mustache on each side of his cheek would almost get tangled in back of his head.

I first saw this officer at a play given by the society girls of El Paso to raise money to send the 7th Cav polo team to a meeting in California. He had apparently been across the line

into Mexico before the play and was feeling no pain. His reaction to the play was more interesting than the play itself. At the end of the play, he went to the stage, kissed all the girls, turned and thanked the audience for coming, and then said, "1 know I have the worst reputation in the Army for swearing; I am not going to disappoint you all tonight. I have the BEST GOD DAMN regiment in the Army."

One evening some time later, a few Air Corps officers and their girlfriends were returning from Mexico at midnight. The border gate was closed at twelve o'clock, so they dropped in a small cafe. A few minutes later Colonel Tommy and some of his friends dropped in. He greeted us and later came over to our table and remarked what a fine outfit the new Air Corps was. He said, "If there were a Mexican raid a hundred miles below El Paso, by the time he and his troops got their horses all saddled and galloped down there, the raiders would be back home again in Mexico; but, you, with your planes always on the alert, could get down there and have them wiped out by the time we were halfway there. If I were young again, I would be right along with you, BUT do you think I am going to admit it when I am sober?"

In the latter part of 1921, Col. Tommy was ordered from the 7th Cav to Ft. Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas, by train. Three of our planes flew a farewell formation over the train. He was standing on the observation platform waving to us, and we tried to drop him a message in a message bag, but it missed the platform. He reached up and pulled the stop cord. The train stopped, and he went back and picked up the message bag. Some years later, my wife and I went over to the General Hospital at Ft. Sam to visit a friend, a Lt. Porter. As it turned out, he or his wife was a distant relation of Colonel Thompkins. As he was in the hospital too, they were in his room. We went in, and Col. Tommy welcomed me by name (he had a marvelous memory for names), and during the conversation I reminded him of our trying to drop this message bag to him. He said, "Prosser, I still have that bag, and it is one of my prize souvenirs!"

The social life in El Paso during the early twenties was really quite exciting. The prohibition in the United States caused most of the parties to start across the line in Juarez. The officer's club was very popular. To one of the formal dress parties

at this club, I had invited a new girlfriend. A couple of us went across the line late in the afternoon, and by the time I drove my Stutz Bearcat out to the house to pick up this date, I was feeling very good. Parked the car, got out, and as I started up the stairs, I stubbed my toe and kind of fell. The girl and her parents were sitting on the front porch and watched the whole show, and, of course, they would not let their darling daughter go to the party with me. I went back to my apartment, parked the car, and in walking by the apartment house, I saw a light in a young lady's apartment. She was a beautiful blonde, and I believe some very wealthy banker was paying for the apartment. I knew her, of course, so dropped in to have her sympathize with me, and she said, "How about taking me to the dance?" Oh! That would be great. She went in the other room and came out dressed in a beautiful green velvet evening gown, and away we went.

When we arrived at the club, I took her coat into the dressing room and talked with some friends. When I came out, she was dancing with a bachelor Major. She was the most beautiful girl at the party. Her banker friend danced with her, and the Major took up most of her time. I was only a Lieutenant. The next afternoon the major called me and asked me what the hell I meant by bringing that girl to a very VIP dance. I told him that he seemed to enjoy her, dancing about every third dance with her, and he kind of laughed. Then he told me that he had received half a dozen calls from the wives of the senior officers giving him HELL for bringing her to the party. We had quite a laugh over it.

One of our duties there was to fly to any surrounding towns or cities which asked for a plane to show off at some celebration. It was Lt. Bob Knapp's turn to make one of these flights. I think it was at Albuquerque, New Mexico. The day after his arrival there, we got a wire stating that he had ground looped on landing and ran into a fence, wrecking his left wing. Please send him a new wing. I was supply officer, so I crated the wing and had a hard time getting it into the baggage car of the train that went to Albuquerque. Two days later we got a wire from Bob to send up a mechanic to put the wing on. Of course, I wanted to fly the mechanic up, but the Commanding Officer knew Bob and I were very good bachelor friends, so thought it best for us not to get together up there and ordered Lt. Ray

Zettle to fly the mission. An hour or so after he took off he returned, saying he had run into a bad snow storm and had to turn around. The next day Major Leo Walton said, "OK, Prosser. You try it."

I ran into the same snowstorm, but it looked as though it was clearing, so I landed in a large plowed field. It finally stopped snowing, so I took off. Of course, the plowed field was rather muddy, and I had a hell of a time getting off the ground. Finally, just as I made it, the plane hit something but seemed to fly all right. Finally, I found the town and the field where Bob's plane was. There was a kind of ridge in the field that I landed on, and I ground looped to the left. No damage to the plane, but when I looked the plane over, I found out that the left wheel was what hit something on the takeoff and blown the tire, and that caused the left ground loop. Otherwise, I might have ground looped to the right like Bob did and hit the same fence.

It was kind of late in the afternoon, and no one was around, so I went into town looking for Bob. No Bob. I finally went into the Chamber of Commerce and talked to a young chap who said he thought he knew where Bob and the other officer who had accompanied him were. We went to an old broken-down hotel, knocked on the door of a room on the second floor and were told to come in. We did and found Bob and his friend in a great big double bed with two very charming young ladies. We went out to a large ranch a couple of miles out of town, and there were Bob and the officer he had taken with him, but in very poor condition. I asked Bob where the wing was, and he said that they could not get the crate out of the baggage car, so took all the rest of the baggage out and left the car at the station. Well, I had put it in, so knew how to get it out. Got some help and a truck, took it out to the field, and started to uncrate it. I looked at the wing and then at the plane and found out that Bob had been greeted by some town officials, had a FEW drinks and wired for the wrong wing. I recrated the wing, put it back in the baggage car and wired for the right wing.

While I was waiting for the other wing to get there, a Lt. Dale Gaffiny flew in on his way to another town. Bob had been told to have some gasoline for him. No gasoline and no Bob. I told Dale to wait at the field (he was rather a strict officer), and I would go in and get hold of Bob and find out about the gas. No,

Dale insisted on going with me. Well, what could I do. We found Bob in the same condition, and he had forgotten about the gas. We got some gas for Dale and sent him on his way.

The new wing arrived, and we helped the mechanic to put it on. It was really freezing at night, so the mechanic asked Bob if he had drained the radiator. Oh, yes, that was all taken care of, but he did not know that you had to lift up the tail of the plane to get the last three inches of water out. And, of course, that three inches froze and burst the radiator, so we wired for a new radiator. That arrived and all was set. In those days you had to pull the propeller through to start the engine. This propeller had a very thin trailing edge, and in pulling it around, the mechanic tore out about three inches of the trailing edge. Of course, with three inches out of one blade of the prop, the whole engine would vibrate. We wired for a new propeller. While we were waiting for it, the mechanic whittled the other blade so that there was no vibration, and away we went back to El Paso. When we landed, they were just rolling another plane into the hangar, and one of the men told us that plane was to take off the next morning with Captain "Polo" Clark to go up and find out just what in hell it was all about. We saved him that trip.

About a week later Bob Knapp got a letter from the Commanding Officer of Ft. Bliss asking him to explain his action while in Albuquerque. It seems that Lt. Dale Gaffing had reported the condition he had found Bob in when he stopped there to refuel. Bob brought the letter to me, and we held a conference. We finally decided to forward the letter to the young chap of the Chamber of Commerce who had arranged most of the parties to tell what he thought of Bob's action. The letter was returned stating that Bob and the other officer had gone to church the two Sundays he was there and on one Wednesday evening had gone to the Prayer Meeting. How nice.

The 1st Surveillance Group, U.S. Army Air Corps, Biggs Field, Ft. Bliss, Texas, participated in Army Day held on the flying field during the year 1921, by flying formations and stunting over the two or three thousand spectators, in DH4's, the Airplane of the Day.

At the conclusion of maneuvers, Major Leo Heffernan announced that he had received permission to give a flight to an old lady who had crossed the Plains in a covered wagon and

wanted to fly in an airplane to prepare herself for her final flight to heaven.

Lt. Charles Sullivan, one of our better pilots, was selected to pilot the plane. What with the long skirts of that period and other facts of life, it was rather difficult to get the harness of the parachute adjusted properly on the old lady as the straps had to be stretched between the legs, and get her buckled in the rear seat. This, of course, took place in front of the spectators.

Finally all set, engine started, taxiing slowly with the old lady waving good-by, when the mechanic ran out yelling to Charlie and pointing to the tail surfaces. Sullivan stopped taxiing and got out to check what was wrong. The old lady, full of curiosity, in squirming around trying to see what was going on, must have unbuckled her belt, for she stood up and in so doing knocked the rear seat throttle full open, and away she and the plane went. I have never seen an airplane perform such antics prior to takeoff and in the air, missing the ground by inches it seemed, until the old lady finally began to figure things out, flying straight and level and experimenting with the throttle. She found out that as she slowed the engine down, the nose of the plane dropped, and in this way she brought it in for a landing. How the landing gear took the punishment was certainly a miracle.

The airplane taxied by the spectators with Lt. Clair Chennault in the rear seat carrying the gray-haired wig. The remarks and actions of the crowd during this stunt are hard to imagine, but it was well-received.

Then Sgt. John Doe, who had received permission for a voluntary parachute jump, was buckled into the harness in front of the crowd and given instructions on how to pull the rip cord, etc. At an altitude of about three thousand feet, over he went, and, as would happen at a time like this, the parachute failed to open, hitting the ground across the field from the crowd which seemed to take off en masse to view the remains. A little, short Major Doctor rushed up to the ambulance all out of breath, yelling, "Crank up this ambulance! Crank up this ambulance!" Lt. Rosco Wriston, standing close by, had kind of a smile on his face and the doc yelled, "By God, this is no laughing matter. Get this ambulance started." A sister of one of the officers of Ft. Bliss fainted and was not brought to till six hours later.

Of course, it was a dummy thrown over. Needless to say, this stunt did not go over so big, and if the Major Doctor could have had his way, the Air Corps at Biggs Field would have been court-martialed.

Captain Jimmie Doolittle was stationed with us at Ft. Bliss in 1920. One extremely hot day Jimmie wanted to cool off a bit, so he sat down on the axle of a DH4, and with Alex Pierson as pilot, took off and flew around for fifteen or twenty minutes in the upper cool air, with Jimmie still sitting on the axle holding onto the cross wires. No parachute of course.

While at El Paso, the Air Corps Dirigible, then on a trip around the perimeter of the United States, landed at Ft. Bliss with a colonel in command. Being the only bachelor in the squadron, I had to entertain the three other officers. My present girlfriend was a very good-looking young lady. We got three other charming young ladies, one living at the YWCA, to accompany us across the border to Juarez, Mexico, to show them the sights. Returning before the gate closed at midnight, we went to a very popular basement cafe. Of course, there sat the C.O. of the dirigible with a local colonel, all alone. They had dancing at this cafe, and after we got settled, the visiting Colonel came over and asked this good-looking girlfriend of mine for a dance. When she returned, she said she did not know what to do. The Colonel had asked her to join him at his table. He was a Full Colonel, and your boyfriend is only a Lieutenant; therefore, she should join the higher ranking officer. I told her to tell the Colonel to go plumb to Hell. She did—in a polite manner, though.

During the evening a speed policeman named Lyons came in, called me over and asked me some foolish question about my car. On going back to the table, I looked at the young lady from the YWCA and realized she had been introduced as Mrs. Lyons. Oh, oh! On the way home after dropping off the rest of the party, Lyons on his motorcycle rode up and rested his foot on the running board of my car and asked me, "Well, did my wife have a good time tonight?" The next morning I went to the hotel where the officers were staying, talked with two of them, and asked where the other one was. They told me he was in the next room. I went in, and here he was getting dressed and Mrs. Lyons lying in bed. After things got settled, I asked him if he did

not know she was the wife of a policeman. He explained that in taking her home she said that the YWCA had a curfew at midnight, and she had no place to stay. So what could he do but ask her to come up to his room.

At the next stop of this Dirigible (Brooks Field, San Antonio, Texas), it caught fire and was burned to a cinder. No one was in it at the time, though.

There was a large lake about fifty miles north of El Paso. Very hard to get to by car. Ducks, ducks, ducks. We found a nice landing field close by this lake, so we always had nice wild duck meals. The sportsmen of El Paso complained of this to the Commanding General of Ft. Bliss. General Howz, one of the real old-time gentlemen, ordered us not to fly up there for the purpose of hunting duck. We complied with this order.

Some of our flying training was formation flying. We would take off from Briggs Field and, seeing it was open country to the north, generally fly that way. It did seem rather strange that one of the planes would have engine trouble close to this lake and have to make an emergency landing. Of course, the other planes would land to give aid. Part of our armament in the planes was a shotgun. Every once in a while, the General would find a couple of nice wild ducks in his icebox.

During my duty in Nogales I met a Major Earl O'Donald, doctor in the service. He was transferred to the Army General Hospital in El Paso. He and his wife became very good friends with me and my steady girlfriend, Marie Parr. The doctor owned a Mecer roadster automobile, and I owned a Stutz Bearcat. They were fast cars, and we could do anything we wanted. The doctor would take care of all medical needs, and I would give flights to all speed police. The doctor and I would meet in the late afternoons across the line, race home to the doctor's place, and he would fix dinner of a mixture of raw hamburger. On one of the trips out to the doctor's place on the edge of the city, I was traveling very fast, and a car cut across in front of me. I closed my eyes, gave the steering wheel a little twist and missed. We got to talking about it while we were eating and admitted what Damn Fools we were, wondering how much time we saved by our fast driving and driving within the speed limit. We got in my car, went into town and tried it out. We saved three minutes. What the hell was three minutes to us at that time of day. So, no more speeding.

1920

Chapter Nine

During late 1921 I was ordered to a Radio School at Post Field, Lawton, Oklahoma, close to Ft. Sill, a large Field Artillery Base. I drove my Stutz Bearcat and took a sergeant with me who had friends up that way. It must have been very close to winter, for it was very cold driving in a touring car. We stopped at a small country grocery store for something to eat. There were three or four Graybeards sitting around a red-hot stove. As I went up to them and the stove, remarking how cold it was, one of them said, "What you need is an inside overcoat." I kind of smiled at the joke. After a bite to eat, we started again and the sergeant said that the old man was sure advertising his wares. I asked him what he meant, and he told me that he was trying to sell us a drink to warm us up. My God! Why didn't you tell me so, for I sure could have used an inside overcoat.

Colonel Beck was in command of Post Field at the time, a bachelor, living in the CO's quarters with his mother. One of the unofficial duties of an officer reporting to a new post was to pay a social call on the Commanding Officer in the evening. Most of the time an officer would kind of watch out and pick an evening when the C.0. was out, and then he would just have to leave his card. One evening I saw him take off, so planned to leave my card on the way into town with a couple of other officers. His orderly came to the door and right behind him was the Colonel's mother. I did not know she was living with him then. She invited me in and, of course, I had to go in. She was the widow of a general and very talkative. She had known General Ouster, had a letter from him she had to read to me, and other very interesting experiences. I saw the other officers whom I was to take to town looking in the window wondering what was holding me up. Twice, before the nine o'clock siren, I tried to excuse myself, and once after. But no; another letter, etc. So I gave

up hope. She was a very interesting old lady, so I just sat back and enjoyed her stories. Finally the Colonel came home and looked very surprised to see me there, and I explained my presence. I did not have my watch, nor was there a clock around, so, I asked him what time it was. He looked at his watch and said that it was just a quarter after one. Oh, God!

When all dolled up, this Colonel Beck, the C.O., was a very handsome officer and gentleman. He became quite friendly with a Judge O'Neil of Oklahoma City and his beautiful young wife. She spent a lot of time at Post Field and, of course, the Colonel would go to the judge's home quite often. After one party he attended there, the word got around that the Colonel had been shot in the back of the head and killed. The Judge's story was that after the party, he had to take an old gentleman friend home across town. When he got home, he told the Colonel of a very old pistol he had. The Colonel asked to see it, so the Judge went upstairs and brought it back. In showing it off, it accidentally fired, and the shot hit the Colonel in the back of the head. An older officer of Post Field went up to investigate and had to take the Judge's story as true.

Major Tom Lamphier took over command of Post Field. I had permission to fly to El Paso a few times over the weekends and finally got to the point where Major Lamphier would give me fifty dollars to bring back a case of liquor. The Major came to me one time and said that a full colonel from Ft. Sill had to go to El Paso at his own expense, and would I fly him down. The fifty dollars, of course. On the way down the oil pressure went a little off, so when I landed I asked an old sergeant who had been with the squadron a long time to look at it. It was rather late when we landed, and of course, I wanted to get to town as soon as possible. The Colonel called a friend of his living at Ft. Bliss about half a mile from the field and asked him to come over and pick him up. This friend said he was just taking a bath and could not get there for some time. I told the Colonel that there was taxi service, but, no, he would wait for his friend. He showed up a half hour later.

A couple of days later we were to take off, and I asked the sergeant if he had checked the oil pressure. Oh, yes; everything was OK. Of course, it was the pilot's duty to check the engine and plane, but the Colonel was in a hurry, so off we went.

About an hour out, the oil pressure started to drop, and I knew I was losing oil. I should have headed for Carlsbad, but this other town was closer. I found a rather small field, checked it, and as I circled to land, the engine started to freeze. Just did make it. In checking the engine I found the plug in the crankcase had become loose and fallen out. Well, we found a plug that would fit, filled up with oil and looked the situation over. Hotter than hell; no wind and a small field. I suggested to the Colonel that we wait til early morning when the air was heavier, but, no, he was in a hurry. I got kitty corner across the field, gave her the gun and away we started. I saw that I was not going to make it and tried to bounce it over the fence, but caught the top wire of the fence. That was crash number 7-with a case of Scotch on board.

The procedure in case the engine was not damaged was to take it out of the plane and have it shipped to the depot. I wired Post Field of the crash, took the engine out with the help of some of the townsmen, and rushed over to the station to get the train that was just about due to take us to another town on the line where there were plenty of level fields. One of the townsmen carrying my bag kind of shook it and remarked that it sure sounded good. We could see the train coming, but we stepped behind the station, opened a bottle, and we all had a drink.

We got on the train, and I sat down alongside of the Colonel who was all dolled up in his nice uniform. I was a First Lieutenant and kind of tired and dirty. At the next stop a very good-looking girl got on board and sat right across from us. I looked her over, got up and went to the washroom, cleaned up the best I could, put on my coat and Sam Brown belt, and went back to my seat. The Colonel looked me over and said, "Ha, by God, it took a skirt to do it."

We spent the night at this other town, and the next morning Lt. McBlain flew in. We were at the field to meet him, and I had gasoline to refuel the plane. I stayed to help with this, and the Colonel went in, paid the bill and brought out our luggage. He called me to one side and told me that one of the bottles was leaking. Too bad. We took off with two of us in the rear cockpit and arrived at Post OK. Major Lamphier was there to meet us, and we went to my quarters and had a drink. The

colonel's car showed up, and as he started out, I told him that he had been the one to pay the bills at the hotel, and if he would tell me what my share was, I would pay him. Remember, if I had not flown him down, he would have had to take the train at his own expense. He got out a small notebook and said that he had spent just ten and a half; give him five dollars and he would call it square. I said, "No, I have the right change," and gave him five twenty-five.

After the Radio School was over, I was ordered to Ft. Sill as Air Corps instructor of the Citizen Summer Training Camp which was to start in about three weeks. While waiting for this Camp to start, I did a lot of flying.

One of the reserve officers who had attended the Radio School, whose tour of duty was up, lived in the Middle west and wanted someone to fly him home. It was a week or two before the CMTC started, so Major Lamphier said I could fly him home, provided I would stop at Lawrence, Kansas, and burn up a wrecked plane. Sure. We got to Lawrence and with the help of some local men got the engine, which was not damaged, out. I cut open the main gas tank, flooded the plane, and set it on fire. Of course, I forgot the nine gallons of gas in the reserve tank, and when that exploded, it blew gasoline all over the engine which we had rolled about ten feet away, and away that engine went. Oh, well, it saved the taxpayers some money by not having to ship it to a depot.

The field I had picked to land in was not too large and on a little slope. The wind was blowing down the slope. What to do—take off down the slope with the wind, or up the slope into the wind and over the town. Into the town looked best, so away we went. I got off all right and sighed with relief, when BANGO. I hit something solid, looked around and saw a water tank falling over. I got across town OK, but crashed into a field and completely wrecked the plane. No one was hurt.

I wired Post Field for a replacement plane, but I guess Major Lamphier thought better of it and ordered me back by train. The reserve officer went on his way at his own expense.

Major Tom Lamphier ordered a cross-country mission to Denver, Colorado, with twenty-nine planes in formation. We spent a couple of days in Denver, and then half the planes flew to Colorado Springs. The other half had a night mission of dust-

ing artillery fire at Ft. Collins. I was with this flight. We found the landing field that they had picked out for us. It was rather small. Lt. Ken Walker was the first to land. He had to ground loop at the end of his run to prevent him from running into a fence. No brakes in those days. I was right behind Ken and had a funny feeling everything was just perfect, landed and stopped close to the fence. The next plane crashed, so that mission was called off. Imagine our trying to land in this field after dark. Twenty of the twenty-nine planes arrived back at Post Field. The other nine were scattered from Hell to breakfast. I believe that most of them did arrive back at the field, though.

In my spare time, I prepared a program for my instructing the thirty students I would have at this camp. Talks, visits to the installations at Post Field, etc. I took a weekend trip to El Paso, and when I returned Monday, I found I had a hundred and thirty students. Oh, God! What a life. I was assigned to a company that consisted of three platoons and was given command of the 3rd Platoon by the captain commanding the Company. I asked him what I was supposed to do, and he told me to teach them to march and the manual of the rifle. I told him that I knew nothing about either of these, that I had done a little marching, carrying the rifle at Ground School in 1917. That was too bad; maybe I had better go over and see the General. This I did. I told him I had been assigned as Air Corps Officer to the camp and did not believe I should be assigned the job of teaching the students in march and manual of the rifle; furthermore, I did not know how to march nor the use of the rifle. He looked at me in disgust and said, "An Army officer who did not know these rules; by God, you will get over there, study these, and do the duty you are assigned to."

I used to sit up till about midnight studying what I would do the next day, and, of course, the General would come by on his great big, beautiful, white horse and watch me every morning. I also had a regular army sergeant who knew all of the rules and regulations and was a great help to me. I guess I got by with it. Did my duty as Air Corps instructor in the afternoons.

One of the requirements for the Air Corps students was that they would get about a ten-minute flight in an aeroplane. I went to Colonel Lamphier and told him my troubles—one

hundred and thirty flights. He turned the field over to me with all available planes and pilots. One kind of sourpuss officer complained to me about this flying, and I told him it was the Colonel's order. Oh, hell. All right. We were landing the planes out in the center of the field. One student would get out and another run out and climb in the rear cockpit. This one student, as he climbed in, reached over to the pilot in the front seat, handed him a quarter, and said, "Give me a good flight, will you?" Of course, it was this pilot who had complained. He cut the engine, left the plane sitting in the middle of the field, and walked off. Things will happen.

On the last day of the camp, we had to pass in review before the General, his staff, and local dignitaries. This was performed by marching in a column of four to the right of the reviewing stand, then square to the left into two lines abreast. As we were about to pass the stand, give the order, "Eyes Rights" I in the lead would salute, and the men would glance to the right.

The stand was along the side of a road, and, as we approached this road in the column of four, I saw a car parked at the edge of the road with a girl sitting on the running board, dress above her knees, knees spread apart, and no pants on. I gave the order to turn left, and as we passed the car, I came very close to give the order, "Eyes, right," but saw that we were quite close to the stand and thought the General on the stand might hear me, so no go. After the show was over, the sergeant asked me why I didn't do it, for he knew I wanted to. The General gave me a very good efficiency report.

Chapter Ten

After the camp was closed, I was ordered back to Briggs Field, El Paso. Major Leo Heffernan had taken command of the 12th Squadron. He was another very good officer and gentleman. The squadron really did not have much to do, so the Major decided to take the whole outfit on a trip up north for a month. Wives and girlfriends included. Lt. Gale was Transportation Officer, so he had charge of the convoy of trucks. I was Radio Officer; so, rigged up a radio communication set in a half ton truck. Major Heffernan, non-pilots, and ladies took off by car for a hotel in a small town about thirty miles north.

The planes took off and landed at this town. The convoy started, and I drove to the end of the paved road and set up my radio station. The convoy appeared, and I took off for another twenty miles or so and set up again. From the end of the pavement, it was a dirt road with about every half mile, a long stretch of heavy sand. I waited for two or three hours for the convoy, and, of course, figured on a breakdown, so got in my truck and went back to find out what happened. It seems that the regulations on convoy travel were that the vehicles would stay not over fifteen feet apart. They were great big, old, liberty trucks. The first one would get in the sand and get about three quarters through and slow up. To get into low gear, the truck would have to come to an almost complete stop, and then it and about three other trucks fifteen feet behind them, would be stuck in the sand. On much effort of the enlisted men, the trucks would finally get through this stretch of sand. Lt. Gale would have them all move up to the regulation fifteen feet apart. Then, the next stretch of sand and the same old story. The master-sergeant advised Lt. Gale to stop the first truck at the start of the sand and get in low gear and plow through one at a time. No, that would be breaking regulation. Well, I took over, and we followed the sergeant's advice. Finally got up to

my radio station late in the evening. The enlisted men were all tired out and had only sandwiches for lunch, so I called a halt for the night. Also, the road from then on was on the top of a level alongside a dry stream bed, and the lights on the trucks were very poor.

Fires were started, and the cooks took over. About the time we were ready to eat, Lt. Gale came running through camp ordering everyone to break camp and start out. It seemed that Gale had gotten to a phone, talked to Major Heffernan, told him the story, and the Major gave the order to proceed. Well, knowing the condition of things, I canceled the order, got hold of the Major, and he agreed with me.

The next day, we got the convoy into the town where the C.O. and the girls were staying, and, lo and behold, there was a telegraph order transferring me to Hawaii by way of a commercial line leaving from Los Angeles in a very few days. I packed my belongings and went to the hotel to say good-by to the C.O. He asked me where I was going, and I showed him the orders. He told me I could not leave till we reached the camping grounds. I argued about the short time I had. I was Supply Officer and also Post Exchange Officer, and it would take some time to turn over the supplies to another officer. He won out, though.

Chapter Eleven

I sure had a Hell of a time, but finally got away with my new, six-month old puppy. It was the middle of summer and HOT hell across Arizona. The puppy jumped out of the car in the middle of the desert. I chased him and found him lying down, almost passed out. I damn near fell right along side of him.

I came to the town of Salome, Arizona. I had passed through this town in 1920, then a little, one-horse town out in the desert. In 1922, the roads were terrible, driving up dry river beds, etc. As I approached Salome, there were large billboards with a picture of the legendary Lady Salome, dressed as she appeared in the old days, with a statement, "Salome, where she danced on the sands." Also, another board stating that in Salome there was a frog seven years old that had not learned to swim yet. The water was brought in by tank cars.

When I arrived there this time, it was much larger, and there was some new building. I went in a small cafe, and while eating, I asked the counterman who built up the town. He told me a Mr. Dick Wick Hall. He came into the cafe then, and I was introduced to him. I had read stories written by him some years earlier in the Sunset Magazine and was very pleased to meet him. I had broken a spring on my car by hitting a ditch. He took a look at it and called his man from the garage. This mechanic said he thought he had a spring that would fit my car, and it did.

I had a bottle of tequila with me, and Dick Wick Hall and I sat around talking. He told me that he had made and lost several fortunes in the mining game and had always wanted to buy a mine of his own. He heard of the Old Apache Copper Mine just around a small hill from Salome, and he bought it for twenty-five thousand dollars, and was working it. He also issued the weekly Salome Sun newspaper. I told him I was on my way to Honolulu, and he put me on the mailing list of this paper.

He also said that if the mine panned out, he was going to build a very fancy hotel there in town and charge fifty dollars a day for the rooms. There were so many wealthy people driving great big cars through there, he knew he could make some money on that. He also told me he was going to build a golf course four hundred and fifty miles long. A player would have to ride a horse and have a couple of pack mules to carry the equipment. He used to describe some of the holes in the Salome Sun newspaper.

When I came to pay him for gas and the repair of the car, I said that I hoped I did not have any more trouble, for I was running out of money. He handed me back all but two dollars and fifty cents, telling me to send him a check when I reached Honolulu, that the two dollars and fifty was for the mechanic.

Of course, I took some of his stories with a grain of salt. But passing through Blythe, Arizona, I ran across an old gray-beard man and got talking with him. I told him of meeting Dick wick Hall and some of his stories. The old man knew Hall and said that all of them were true. He had made and lost several fortunes in the mining game. I did get the newspaper for quite a while and passed it around to my friends. They all got a big kick out of it. I corresponded with Mr. Hall for some time, and he told me that he had shipped a carload of copper ore to Douglas, Arizona, and it turned out quite valuable. He had incorporated a company and was selling shares in it. Of course, I bought some, but they became worthless. Some years later, I was in a broker's office and asked him if he had ever heard of this mine and about the Salome Sun. He looked up the company and said it was still on the market, but the newspaper was worth more than the mine shares.

I finally made it to Los Angeles, one day before the departure date of the boat. I made my reservations, then drove my car with the dog to Oakland, turned them over to my sister with a copy of my orders, and told her to deliver them to Ft. Mason, San Francisco, the Army Transport docks. I took the night train back to L.A. in time to make the departure of the boat. There were forty-eight officers on board. I was the only aviator. One of the passengers came on board with a case of gin. It was a wonderful relaxing six days to Honolulu.

After a week's stay at the Moana Hotel on the beach at Waikiki, I reported to Wheeler Field, about forty miles from

Honolulu, the home base of an observation squadron. A Major "Chile" Wheeler in command. The duties of the squadron were to work with the troops at Schofield Barracks, Infantry, Cavalry, and Field Artillery, and, also, with the Coast Guard at other bases.

In talking with other officers, I found out that they had been waiting two and three months for their cars. Mine arrived on the next transport, with the dog. I guess Ft. Mason did not want to take care of my dog too long.

The Air Corps bachelors at Wheeler Field were quartered in a set of married officers' quarters, and I had the master bedroom. Major Bob Goolrick, one of those outstandingly handsome officers in a uniform, arrived and took over command of Wheeler. Being a bachelor, he was quartered with us. I gave up the master bedroom and moved in with Lt. Joe Wilson.

During the first officers' meeting, Major Goolrick stressed the fact that he had made it a policy that on a post where the commanding general upheld the prohibition laws, he did not want any of his officers to offer him a drink ON the Post; in town, maybe, but not on the post.

A few days later, Joe and I finished our work about four o'clock, an hour earlier than usual, so we repaired to our room across the hail from Major Goolrick, whom we knew was in. Being a hot and muggy day, Joe said in a rather loud voice, "Gosh, Harvey, wouldn't a nice cold highball taste good?" "It sure would. I'll go down and get the glasses and ice. You get out the Okulehou." As I passed the Major's door, I tinkled the ice in the glasses. "Say when, Harvey," said Joe, quite audibly as he poured the "Oke" into my glass. Then "Here's how," also quite audibly by both of us.

With that, Major Goolrick walked out into the hall, whistling; in and out, in and out, he strolled. Of course, after his resolute statement, we did not dare offer him a drink and completely ignored him.

Years later, I ran into Colonel Goolrick at a cocktail party and reminded him of that incident, and he said, "Harvey, I could have killed you and Joe that afternoon. You knew my tongue was hanging out a mile."

The Coast Artillery at Ft. Kamama received two 16-inch guns. They were transported from the wharf through Honolulu

at night and well-guarded so spies would not see them. I heard later that a Japanese helped lay the concrete foundation for these guns at the fort. Lt. Courtland Brown and I were assigned to work with the colonel who was in charge of these guns, which could shoot out of sight of land. The colonel insisted that the first shot be on the target. We had on our plane all kinds of lines drawn on the wings and every other place available, so that we would be able to tell the gun crew the exact position of the enemy, which in those days was impossible. Brown told him the best way to do it was to start firing, and by the third shot, we would have him on target by telling him the distance the first two shots were from the target, of course, no shots were ever fired from these guns.

Another of the missions we carried out was flights at night to have the Field Artillery units try to pick us up by their very bright search lights. Most of the time we would have to fly into a light before they could find us. We would come in through the Pali, a large break in the mountain, with our engines at throttle and glide across the city before they ever heard us. Another of the missions for the bombers from Luke Field was to tow a wind sock a thousand feet behind it at night and then shoot at this target They were not too good. One of the shells passed in front of the plane that Lt. McCrady was piloting. It was quite interesting flying for us.

I was standing with one foot on a bench one day, and Lt. Wood came up behind me and pushed his knee into the calf of the leg I was standing on. I fell, and in hitting the concrete sidewalk, I dislocated my kneecap. They pulled on my foot and snapped the cap back in place, but they took me to the hospital. The doctor felt my knee and said that I had quite a bit of fluid under the cap. Did I want them to take it out? Oh, God! Water under the knee. I heard it was very dangerous, but he said it wasn't, so I said to go ahead and take it out. They put me on an operating table, a syringe that looked about half an inch thick to me, without any painkilling shots or what have you. He rammed it under one side of my kneecap, drew a little fluid out, withdrew the needle, looked at it and said, "We didn't get much out of that side," and went into the other side. I sure thought I was going to pass out.

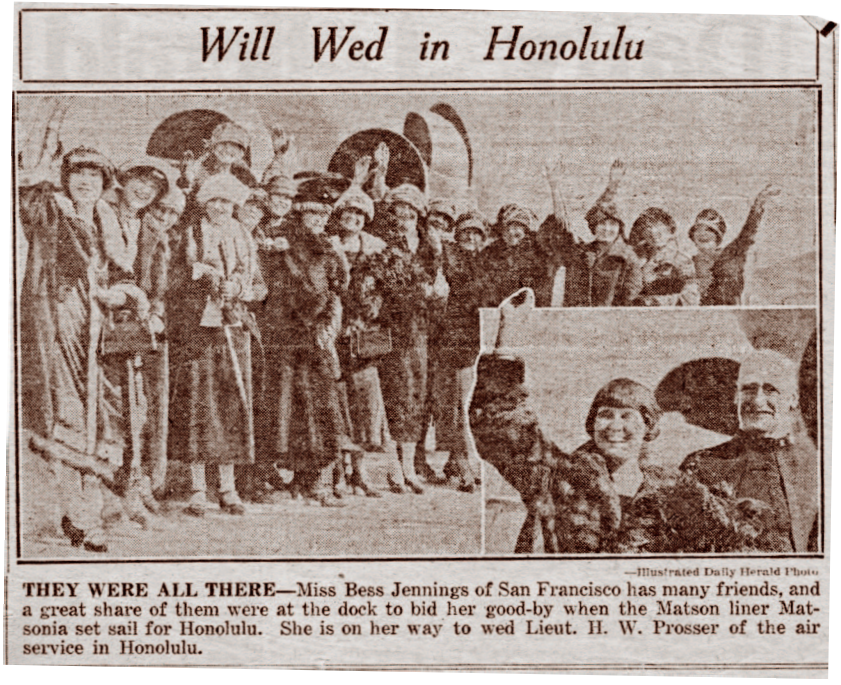
They gave me a very thorough examination and said

that the kneecap was very loose, that I might be flying around in a rather relaxed position and hit a bad air current, snap to attention, and out would go my kneecap. Well, the only thing to do was to operate and shorten the ligament alongside the cap. It would take about two weeks. As a bachelor, just before the Christmas holidays, I thought that would give me a nice rest before the big celebrations. A month later they let me get up, and my knee was stiff. They had no physiotherapy at that time and wanted to give me a month's sick leave to walk around and get plenty of exercise. Oh, my God! Nothing to do and time on my hands in Honolulu.

The only alternative was to send me over to Letterman General Hospital at the Presidio in San Francisco. That sounded better. My family lived in Oakland, and a lot of friends around. The C.O. of the hospital issued me orders and told me there was a transport leaving the next day. It was loaded to capacity, so he told me not to stop at the purser's desk till we were at least an hour out, for not having any more room, he might stop the ship and put me off. This I did and showed him my orders. He checked through his list and told me I was not on it. He did get up, looked out of a porthole, and found we were too far out to put me off. The only vacant room was in the isolation section of the hospital. Seeing there were no contagious diseases on board, he assigned me there to a private room and bath with an orderly. How nice!

I reported to Letterman General Hospital and was assigned a bed in a ward. Told to report to the Physiotherapy Department every Friday and receive an hour of treatment. This went on for three months. During that time I played around San Francisco, my home in Oakland, and my old friends. Finally, when my knee was in good shape again, they offered to give me a three month's sick leave. This I did want, but in those days you had to have ten hours a month flying time to draw flying pay, which was fifty per cent of your base pay. I did get December flying time, so needed twenty hours for January and February. I was ordered to Crissy Field, Presidio of San Francisco, got the flying time and took three month's of regulation leave. This was spent around Oakland, mostly dating an old grammar school girlfriend, Bess Jenning, whose home was within two blocks of where my parents lived. A good

time was had by all. On arrival back at Wheeler Field, I realized I missed this girlfriend, and finally decided I was in love with her and asked her to marry me. This was agreed to, and we were married the fifteenth of November, 1924, at my bride's sister's home in Honolulu.



Will Wed in Honolulu

—Illustrated Daily Herald Photo

THEY WERE ALL THERE—Miss Bess Jennings of San Francisco has many friends, and a great share of them were at the dock to bid her good-by when the Matson liner Matsonia set sail for Honolulu. She is on her way to wed Lieut. H. W. Prosser of the air service in Honolulu.

Up to that time, I was living with three other bachelors in Honolulu commuting every day to Wheeler Field, forty miles away in our own cars. We decided to buy a Ford for this commuting service. Finally, one of the officers was ordered home, so that left just three of us owning the car.

We decided to take our honeymoon at the Army Rest camp on the slopes of the Mau Loa Volcano on the island of Hawaii. I asked the other two officers, Lt. Joe Wilson and Lt. Russell Cooper, if I could take the Ford with me for the two weeks I was to be gone. They said yes, provided they could go along with me. This was agreed on, so my bride had two reserve husbands.

Lt. Joe Wilson was quite a character. He took a two months' leave back to the U.S.A. and took his car with him. About the time his leave was up, he realized that by the time

he arrived back at Wheeler, he would be AWOL (absent without leave), so he wrote a letter requesting an extension. This, of course, went through channels, and by the time the headquarters sergeant was ready to take it in to the general, he realized Joe was five days AWOL. The general had a wire sent to Joe ordering him back on the next commercial liner. Joe was staying at the officers' club at Crissy, and he had a friend drive him down to the wharf. He was in time to get on the boat, but he had some flowers and telegrams to send to a number of girlfriends, so missed the boat. Joe told us a few days after his return that there was a launch tied to the dock, and he asked the pilot of this launch if he thought he could catch up with the liner. Well, he said it was quite a way out, but to get in and he would try. They caught up with the liner as it was just about to go through the gate. They lowered a ladder, and Joe climbed aboard. One of the officers remarked that it must have cost him quite a bit to hire this launch. Joe looked around and said, "By God, I forgot to pay him."

The honeymoon was quite a success, and we returned to Honolulu, rented an apartment where I could not keep my dog, so the commanding Officer of Wheeler asked me whether I wanted to let his three children take care of him. That was fine. The social life was really quite something. My wife's sister and her husband had lived in Honolulu for ten or fifteen years and were in High Society. We had quite a social life during our final months in Hawaii.

I was supply officer at Wheeler, and one day my sergeant, the absolute best non-com on the field, came to me and told me there was an engine missing. We checked the records, and sure enough, one was missing. We decided to fly down to Luke Field and check there. Before we could get off the ground, the Air Corps major in charge of all Air Corps supplies on the Island came in and wanted me to go to town with him for some reason. I told the sergeant to find another pilot to fly him to Luke. When we arrived in the Major's office in town, Lt. Ray Dunn, his assistant, was talking on the phone, and from his side of the conversation we knew something serious had happened. He talked and talked, but finally hang up and told us that Lts. Wade and McBlain and two enlisted men had just been killed in airplane wrecks behind a sugar mill.

I jumped in a car and started out to the place where it had happened. On the way, I saw an army ambulance coming, got out and stopped it. Lt. McBlain was on the way to the hospital. He was unconscious and very badly cut up around the face. He survived, but sure had a scarred face the rest of his life. I continued on to the wrecks and took care of the three that had been killed.

My sergeant had asked Lt. Wade to fly him to Luke, and in taking off, they dropped down in a canyon at the end of Wheeler Field runway. He kept on flying down below the banks of this canyon, and not knowing or seeing three high tension wires crossing the canyon just behind this sugar mill, hit them, breaking two and crashed right there. The manager of the mill apparently heard the crash and called Luke Field. They checked and did not have a plane in the air, so it could not be one of theirs. Then someone had a bright idea that maybe it was from Wheeler. They called, and Wheeler could not find out who it was. I guess Wade did not check out before he took off, and for some reason, they did not know the number of the plane. Lt. McBlain said he would fly down and see if he could see the number on the wreck. He took off with a mechanic, flew low over the wreck, and, of course, hit the remaining wire and crashed within twenty-five feet of the other wreck.

What a foul-up! I blamed it all on the Supply Major. If he had showed up ten minutes later, I would have been on the way to Luke with the sergeant.

Chapter Twelve

About ten months after our marriage, I was ordered to Kelly Field, Texas, my old stamping ground, we took an Army transport to San Francisco, and with my wife just about ready to have our first baby, I left her in Oakland with her mother to go to Letterman Hospital to have the baby. She arrived at Kelly a couple of months later with a most beautiful baby girl, we named her Velma Elaine.

I was assigned as Commanding Officer of the Service Squadron at Kelly. This squadron was composed of about one hundred and sixty enlisted men whose duties varied. They were the orderlies at headquarters, the firemen, the guard duty men, and any duty not connected with lying. I was told by the previous C.O. that the ranking sergeant or the sergeant-major of the squadron knew what it was all about, and the mess sergeant was the best on the field. All of the enlisted men of the other squadrons who lived off the base ate lunch at this mess hall.

The really hard job was trying to keep the bed bugs out of the beds. Major Frank Andrews was the C.O. of Kelly at the time, and ONE of the BEST. He went on up to two stars, but was killed in a plane wreck which certainly was too bad for the future of the Air Corps.

The Major and his adjutant, Lt. John B. Patrick, made an inspection of each barrack, four or five of them, every Saturday morning. Pat and I were good friends, but he, the Louse, always tried to find something wrong with my outfit, and much to his disappointment, he never could.

One Saturday when the Major was away, he made the inspection. Nothing wrong, of course, till we got to the Mess Hall. That was in perfect order. He asked me about the ration book; was it up-to-date. My God, I had never heard of a ration book. I told him it was right up-to-date, that I had seen it just a couple of days ago, and it was OK'd. "You're crazy as hell. I have

seen that ration book a number of times, and it was never up-to-date. Where is it!" The mess sergeant was away. I told him that, and he kept the book in his room which was off the mess hail. "Well, as soon as he comes back, have him bring it to my office, and do not let him touch it." Just as Pat was leaving, in walked the sergeant. "Where is your ration book?" asked Pat. He kind of hesitated, but then did say that it was over in his room, backing up my statement. "Well, I want to see it," says Pat. We went into his room, hesitated again, and then came out with, "I'll be frank with you, Lieutenant. I do not keep a mess book." Here Pat had said that he had seen it three or four times, and I had said that I had seen it just a couple of days ago. Pat, with a look of scorn on his face, walked out saying, "Get a mess book and bring it up to date." For each enlisted man who ate at the squadron mess, the squadron received a certain amount of money. This was all recorded in the ration book against the money spent.

One of the VIPs of Kelly died. The burial ceremony was to be held in a church in San Antonio, and most of the squadrons of enlisted men were ordered to escort the body from the church to the train. The Service Squadron was not involved for too many of the men were on special duty. The next morning, Major Andrews was in a storm. For some reason, the marching of the men was something to make any Army officer hit the ceiling. How come Army officers and men did not know how to march! He issued an order that all squadrons, every enlisted man attending, would have an hour of drill at reveille, which was at five o'clock in the morning, and that an officer would be with the squadron. Oh, God. I was the only officer in the Service Squadron, so, of course, it meant four bells every morning for me. Then the complaints began. Many of the enlisted men of the squadron were heads of departments that did not open till nine o'clock, and they lived in town. The officers tried to get the men assigned to them off this five o'clock practice drill. No. The Commanding Officer said that every enlisted man would attend. After long arguments, eventually about half of the men of my squadron were released from having to attend. The rest of the men were up in arms.

Finally, after about a month of the five o'clock drilling, I went into the C.O. and told him about my trouble, and that the men were about as good at marching as I thought they would

ever be, and would like to discontinue this duty. We said, "Well, Harvey, I guess you can stop this training." Just as he said that, his adjutant came through the door and heard him tell me that. He said, "Why Major, you are not going to let Harvey stop training his troops; they are the worst trained outfit on the base." The Major said, "Well, Harvey, maybe you had better keep it up for a couple of more weeks." You know what would have happened if I would have had a club in my hands. AND Pat always claimed to be a friend of mine.

One of the big moving picture companies got permission to make Kelly the headquarters of the movie, "Wings," the first moving picture on flying. They moved in with all of their equipment. I was not one of the pilots to fly in the picture, but was assigned to one of the assistant directors, and flew him around picking out locations for different scenes. One of them that we found was a field with a cliff at the end of the field, about fifty feet down into a canyon. The pilot was supposed to land, overshoot the field, and crash over the cliff. An old plane of the same type was rigged up on the edge of this cliff. The pilot landed, running down the field toward the cliff. The cameras were cut and switched to the plane on the edge, which was ejected over. There were cameras at the bottom of the cliff getting the pictures of removing the pilot from the plane, who, of course, was not seriously injured.

Another one of the scenes was a formation of planes strafing the enemy with forward firing guns out at Camp Stanly, of course, coming in very low. One of the pilots apparently missjudged his height off the ground, ran into the ground, and was killed. They had five cameras around this scene and got the entire picture. The officials of the company offered Major Andrew five thousand dollars if he would recommend to Washington that they be allowed to use this scene. He turned down the official. It really might have made quite a scene. Instead, the company paid for a swimming pool to be built on the boundary of Kelly and Duncan Fields.

There was a change of command. Colonel Frank Andrews was transferred out, and Colonel "Bo" Lackland was ordered to Kelly to take over command. He was the commanding officer of Selfridge Field, Michigan, when I cracked up in Yale, Michigan. The officers' quarters at Kelly were really something; small,

made out of beaver board, about six quarters in a row in one building, and no secrets between neighbors. Part of Kelly Field was the old bombing range, a plateau about fifty feet above the main field. This space was not being used in any capacity whatsoever. Colonel Lackland had plans drawn up to build beautiful quarters on the edge of the cliff and an officers' Club on a point of the cliff. This plan had been turned down by the chief of the Air Corps, General Westover, a not too good pilot who was killed in a plane crash at West Point. I believe Colonel H. Arnold took over as Chief of Staff for the Air Corps, and colonel Lackland flew to Washington with the plans and talked with him about them. He agreed it was a wonderful idea, but as there was still mourning for Colonel Westover who had disapproved of it, he did not think it was the right time to approve the plan. What the hell. This space was finally developed into The Flying Cadet Reception renter with quarters and club built in accordance with Col. Lackland's plan. It was called Lackland Field.

My duties as commanding officer of this service squadron were not too strenuous, so I was called on to do a lot of extra flying. One morning I was asked to check out an older pilot in a DH-4 who had been flying pursuit planes overseas. I put him in the back seat, let him make a few landings with me following him on the controls. He seemed to get the hang all right, so I put him in the front seat. He made two good landings, but on the third one, he hit the ground rather hard and bounced. Feeling that he would gun the engine and level off, I let him go too far. When we hit the ground again, the landing gear collapsed. Wreck number one.

I was asked by the engineering officer to accompany him down to Beeville at one o'clock the same day and fly back a Jenny that had been stuck in the mud there. About ten o'clock, I was asked to give a colonel from Ft. Sam Houston a flight. We took off in a DH, flew over San Antonio, Ft. Sam Houston, and some of the surrounding country, landing about noon. I was in a little hurry and might have turned a little before I should have to taxi back to the Flight Line. The axle on the right side collapsed and up on my nose with a broken propeller. I found out later that this axle had not been greased and was worn down to about 1/16th of an inch. Wreck number two.

Well, we got off for Beeville, found the Jenny, dug it out

of the mud, and found both tires flat. I suggested that we go into town and get a pump to pump the tires. Lt. Johnson, the engineering officer, said, "Well, if you are afraid to fly it, I will, and you can fly the DH back." Of course, you know my reaction to that, so away he went. In this Jenny, the gasoline tank was under pressure to feed the gas to the carburetor, and it was leaking air. As the air pump was in the front cockpit, I had to fly from the front cockpit. I got off all right, even with the flat tires, but with no weight in the back, the plane was very nose heavy. The engineering officer should have known that and put some kind of weight in the back cockpit, or maybe I should have. I got so tired holding the stick back to keep the nose up, that I took off my necktie, tied it around the control stick and to my belt. I arrived back at Kelly rather late, and, not wanting to taxi too far on the flat tire, I came in from the west, right alongside the hangars. There was some rather tail grass, but I know I had enough speed to level off and land in the short grass. Being nose heavy, the plane would not level off, so into the tall grass which caught the axle and flipped the plane over on its back. Number three that day.

I went directly over to the C.O. and explained my side of the story. It took ten days to be cleared up. I had been flying all the time and as I was grounded for ten days beginning the date of the crash, I did not lose any flying pay.

A Lt. Fred Nelson was stationed at Books Field, a primary flying school across town from Kelly. Of course, all the instructors had their own ideas on how to teach the students and varied to some degree. Lt. Nelson had the bright idea to get up an instructor's manual. He spent quite a bit of time writing up his thoughts on the subject, and finally, he was ordered to get up a board of officers to investigate and make recommendations. There were about ten of us with three training planes, and we operated from Duncan Field. We studied Nelson's ideas, tried them out in the air, argued about them, and finally agreed on the technique of each maneuver. One of the officers was from Dodd Field which was situated north of town close to Ft. Sam Houston. Lt. Nelson always flew his own plane from Brooks, and would sometimes fly this officer back to Dodd. One morning we agreed on a certain stunt. Lt. Nelson flew the officer to Dodd that afternoon, and on the way to Brooks, he was practicing this

stunt, a loop or something. When he was over on his back, he thought he saw something fly out of the plane. When he landed at Brooks, his briefcase was gone. It contained all of his handwritten notes and all the findings of the board. He advertised in all the newspapers, but no briefcase. What a life. We started all over again.

I was later transferred to March Field, Riverside, California, and there became an instructor in primary flying. It was routine duty till about 1929.

Chapter Thirteen

March Field was rather new, and the officers' quarters had not been completed, so we rented a home in Riverside, about ten miles from the field. Major Millard Harmon was in command. My old friend, Dr. Earl O'Donald, had resigned from the service and was practicing in Los Angeles, about fifty miles away. We needed some furniture, so we made a date with the doctor's wife on a Saturday to help my wife select things. I had a bad boil on the point of my right elbow, and one of the flight surgeons had drained it the day before and put a bandage on it. My mother was staying with us, and Saturday morning she noticed red lines coming up out of the bandage. Blood poisoning. I called the doctor, and he said, "Oh, forget it. I saw it yesterday, and it was all right." We drove into Los Angeles and went up to Dr. McDonald's office. He took one look at me and asked what the hell was wrong. I looked like I would keel over at any minute. He took a look at my arm and rushed me to the hospital. He made two cuts and drained it, then put a rubber through the two cuts to keep it open and draining. My wife drove back to March, and I told her to call Major Harmon when she got back to Riverside to explain what happened, and I would be back as soon as the doctor released me from the hospital.

Five days later, I reported to the Major and sure got hell—five days AWOL. The chief Flight Surgeon had recommended that I be court-martialed. I told the Major my side of the story, and he told me to go to the chief Flight Surgeon and explain it to him. He was an old so and so, reserve officer, and he started in on me. I was just about ready to tell him to go plumb to hell, but then realized he was trying to scare me out of telling my side of the story to a court of inquiry. I let him talk, and he finally said he would recommend to the court that the charges he dropped. How nice of him. And that was the end of that.

During my duty at Kelly Field in 1927, 1 met a gentleman by the name of James (Jimmie) Leonard from around Austin, Texas. He was quite a playboy, and I used to go up to Austin every once in a while to visit him. There were a man and his wife in Austin, both pilots, who owned three old-type bi-planes, and about once a month, they would put on an air show doing all kinds of flying stunts and what have you. She was a crack pistol shot. They would take off in a bi-plane, and she would climb while out on the lower wing, holding onto a strut, while he released about four small balloons. She would fire at them, hitting them all, one day, a young chap came through the crowd at the show and said that he would put on a stunt for them by letting him be tied on the landing gear with rope and chains, locked with padlocks, and come down sitting in the rear cockpit. The owner told him that he could not pay him anything. That was all right, for he would go through the crowd after and collect money. A few of us feeling no pain, tied and locked him. There was not a possible chance of his getting out, we would almost bet on it. He came down sitting in the rear cockpit and went through the crowd and collected sixty-five cents.

Jimmie was a widower, but seemed to have plenty of girl-friends. I was transferred to March Field, Riverside, California, and one evening about six o'clock, a new Buick drove up, and here was Jimmie and a GOOD-looking girl whom he introduced as his wife. It seems as though she was the only daughter of a man who owned most of Johnson City, Texas, and had been a sweetheart of L.B. Johnson during their grammar school days. Of course, she being an only daughter, her parents wanted them to stay in Johnson City, even offered him a nice job. But Jimmie said that he was not going to live off the Old Man and had a job in Santa Rosa, California. Six months later, they did move back to her home town. When Mr. Johnson was elected President, he sent his private plane, Air Force One, to Johnson City to pick up his friends, including Kitty Clyde and Jimmie, to take them to Washington for his inauguration ceremonies and reception. Later, Jimmie was made City Clerk, and he sent me a card stating that I had been made an honorable citizen of Johnson City.

There was a Mr. Blinkinstaff living two doors from me in Riverside who was the underground engineer of a tin mine just outside of Corona, California, which was being developed by a

large company from New York. This mine had been worked by the Spanish when they had control of California. There was a seven hundred foot shaft and two or three large pockets where tin had been taken from. This eastern company was expected to spend about a million dollars to try to find more pockets of tin. Blinkinstaff told me that he thought it was more or less a stock project, and if he found enough tin ore, and they organized a company and sold stock, for me to get in on the deal as much as I could afford. Then, if the stock advanced in price, to sell, and if he found another pocket of ore and it was not publicized in mining papers, and the price of the stock went down, to beg borrow and steal every cent I could to get in on it, for when they told about this new find, the stock would shoot up. Of course, he never did find any ore, and the company gave up the project.

One Sunday morning, Blinkinstaff came over and told me that the pump at the bottom of the shaft was not working, and the water was being lifted out by the bucket that was at the end of the cable. He was going out to try to fix the pump and would I like to come. Sure. When we got to the mine, the local general manager was there, and we went down the shaft. He fixed the pump, and we climbed on the bucket full of water, stood on the edge of the bucket and held onto the cable. About three quarters of the way up, Blinkinstaff reached over and held my shoulder in, because he said there was only a half inch of clearance between the bucket and a beam that crossed the shaft. I was standing with my left foot on the edge, my heel sticking over, and, of course, was pulled through this half inch space. Scratched my ankle bone and caught my heel, crushing my shoe and heel. It sure scared hell out of the company men, because mining regulations stated that passengers could not ride on a full bucket. I was rushed to the hospital at March Field, and they found nothing serious, thank God. I was on crutches for two weeks.

There were some fifteen or twenty veins of tin showing above ground, and the General Manager wanted a picture of this. I told him that March Field had an aerial photography section, and I knew that Lt. Stitt would like to take some aerial pictures just for practice. This was done, and the pictures turned out very well. The General Manager asked me if he could give Lt. Stitt a cash present. This, of course, could not be done, for it

was all government equipment used, but the photo section had a small section fund that he could donate to. He gave twenty-five dollars and gave me a nice silver flask. It was during prohibition, and the flask fitted nicely in my rear pocket.

A visiting fireman dropped in one day, Lt. Charles Douglas, an old friend of mine and Dr. O'Donald. The doctor invited us to L.A. for dinner at the Paris Cafe, quite a noted place at that time. So, Lt. "Pop" Wedentone and his wife, also friends of Douglas, and my wife and I took off on a Friday with Charlie and a few bottles—still Prohibition. Had quite an evening with Charlie falling in love with the hatcheck girl and remaining in L.A.

On the way back about one a.m., I cut the speed crossing an intersection to about fifty, and, of course, the only other car behind me turned out to be a police car. Gene Wedington, knowing that a male policeman could not search a female, picked up, the remaining bottles and put them under her coat. Well, I had to report to court in L.A. Saturday morning. I called Doc, and he said that he would have it all fixed up for me, and not to worry.

I reported, and when it was my turn after a bunch of drunks and bums, I tried to tell the judge who I was and about the doctor, but nothing doing. Twenty dollars or five days. Not having twenty dollars on me, I went over to the desk and started to write out a check. Nothing doing. Get over in that room. I asked to use the phone, but was told again to get over in the room with all the drunks and bums. I saw a phone out side the door and started over, when a great big, burly policeman grabbed me and threw me back in the room. I began to get mad, then came out of it and saw the humorous side of it. They marched us over to the new county jail, and I was checked in. Everything was taken out of my pockets, and I was questioned by an official. When I told him I was an instructor in flying at March Field, he asked me to wait till all the others were through, for he had a son who wanted to learn to fly. We talked things over, and he let me use the phone. I called the doc who said he would send the money right up, and if things did not go right, to call the chief jailer. The man at the desk said he was sorry, but he would have to send me downstairs. As I said, it really had become a joke. So when the head man downstairs told me to strip and take a bath, I got a kick out of it and called the chief jailer. He fixed things

up, and while I was waiting for the money, we had quite a talk. The floor of this part of the jail was so clean you could eat from it. He was a quite interesting gentleman.

When the money came, I went upstairs again to the first man, got my possessions back, and he wrote out a receipt for fifteen dollars. I told him I had been fined twenty dollars, and he said that I had spent fifteen minutes in jail, so I got five dollars knocked off. How about another fifteen minutes? He told me that I would have to stay overnight to get another five bucks off. No soap. So I was a jailbird.

A relative of my wife was in the real estate business in L.A., and was trying to sell a ranch just off the Cajon Pass Road. He stopped by our place and told me about it. There was a beautiful trout stream running through it and out the canyon towards the road, but it disappeared before it came to the road, so no one knew about it. I got to meet the caretaker and could fly my students in the morning, take off about one o'clock, catch the limit of nice trout, and be back in time for dinner.

One day, flying back from Oakland to March, as I approached Bakersfield, I noticed what seemed to be a large bank of fog. When I got closer, I saw it was smoke from a very large forest fire. My God! Right over this private trout stream of mine. One evening, my wife and I took another couple up to the caretaker's house which was close to the fire. I have never seen such a terrible sight. It burned thousands of acres and, of course, ruined the trout stream.

I later heard that a man driving along the Cajon Pass Road saw a small fire about a hundred yards off the road. The more he got thinking about it, he realized that there was no one around the fire, so he stopped at a small grocery store alongside the road and had a hard time trying to point out the fire to the women of the store. By the time they saw it and called the fire department, it was too late. The man remarked that if he had stopped when he first saw it, he believed he could have put it out. But that is the way it goes. No more fish.

I ran across an old friend of mine who lived in Santa Monica and made really good home brew. Another pilot, Lt. Ike Williams, and I used to fly down to his place in the afternoons and enjoy his home brew and tell a few lies. Ike had flown down this one afternoon, so I was piloting the plane on the way back,

feeling no pain. Ike in the back seat, open cockpit, tapped me on the head and said he had to go. I told him it was OK by me, and the next thing I knew was that he was standing on the wing alongside me without his parachute on. Oh, my God! What would I do if he slipped and fell off, of course, he was under tension and could not go. From then on, we took two aeroplanes for our afternoon sojourns.

Doctor O'Donald asked me if I could get up a small group and fly him and the others to a ranch which was owned by a friend of his. I asked the Old Man, the C.O., Major Millard Harmon, about it, and he said that it would be OK by him IF he were invited. I forget how many planes took off, three or four. I could not pilot, for I had a bad sty in one eye, so I flew as passenger with Lt. Whoppy White as pilot. Lt. Ned Schram flew the doc as passenger, and we landed at the ranch OK. A nice evening was had by all, and the next morning we took off to try to locate some deer. White landed in a small field to go down into a canyon on foot. As we got out of the plane, we saw the Major's plane with the ranch owner in the back, diving into this canyon, pulling up and diving again. It looked as though they were shooting at a deer in the canyon. As they flew over us, the Major cut the motor and yelled to his passenger about hundreds of quail. I went back to our plane and got a shotgun. Then the Major landed and said he thought they had wounded the deer they were shooting at and he was still somewhere in the canyon, for they had never seen him leave it. So we spread out, with me last in line. As I passed a large clump of brush, I saw movement in it, went in, and there lay the deer in had shape. I just had a shotgun, so called Whoppie, and he went in with his rifle and put it out of its misery. We shot a total of four deer on that trip.

The officer flying instructors were assigned to four sections. Two of the sections formed a baseball team to play against the team of the other two sections. The team that lost the series of games had to give a party to the other team. The parties were weekend trips. I think the first trip was to Mexicali where we were entertained by the chief of police, of course, most of the time was spent across the line in Mexico, but we had to be back in the USA by midnight, for the gate in the fence was closed at that time. I was sitting in a car with a lady friend of Mrs. Chief and saw that the guard had to hold the gate open for a few

minutes to let two officers come through, Lts. Ned Schram and Billy Goldsborough. The next morning, we all got together to go across the line for breakfast, all but Ned and Billy. No sign of them. When we got to the place where we were to drink—sorry, I mean eat our breakfast—there were Ned and Billy, standing by the bar. I asked them where they spent the night, and they said that they had spent it in Mexico. I told them they were crazy, for I had watched them come back to the USA at midnight the night before. Well, he said that they ran out of something to drink, so went back to the gate which, of course, was closed. They walked up along the fence, saw the light of the town in Mexico, climbed over the fence, walked down the hill and found themselves back in the US. So they climbed over again and spent the night. They never did tell where they slept. The next year, the party was up at Lake Arrowhead. I had planned to drive up with two or three others, including Ned Schram. It was a Saturday, graduation day for one class of flying cadets. They flew in formation in front of the reviewing stand. I was asked to lead a formation in this review, but as I planned to start early to drive up, I asked them to get some other pilot. We were just about ready to start, when the formation flew by. The cadet flying on the left side was a little behind his position and in closing the gap, hit the elevators of the lead plane. That, of course, knocked the elevator down and put the plane into an outside loop. The cadet was thrown clear, and he came out of the back seat with his arms over his eyes, we believe that if he had seen that he was going through the air pretty fast, he might have been able to pull the ripcord of the parachute and come out of it. The pilot went down with the plane and was killed. The men got him out of the plane, and I drove close to the crowd around him. We wondered who it was, so I got out and looked at him. One of the mechanics said that they thought it was Milo Clark, a very close friend of Ned Schram. When Ned heard this, he almost passed out, but it turned out to be a chap by the name of Plummer. He was the pilot they got to take my place. I sure regretted that I turned the flight down.

During the year 1926, Dr. O'Donald delivered our second child into the world, Harvey W. Jr. He first took my wife to a Catholic hospital, but as she was having a very hard time, he recommended that this be the last child and would see to it that

she didn't have any more. He had to move her to the French hospital, for you know that the Catholics will not let this be done in one of their hospitals. He performed a caesarean operation, with the wife of one of the famous movie directors taking a moving picture of the entire operation, the first one ever to be taken. Of course, my wife's face was not in the picture of such an operation.

One night after returning to Riverside about nine, my old friend, Major Charles Clifford, called me from Los Angeles feeling no pain and wanted me to join him. Oh, yes! Anyway, we had a nice talk, and he told me he was writing for True Confession magazine, and he had written a story about me. In the story, he claimed that he was in love with a girl living on a ranch in Mexico, and that I used to fly him down there over the weekends once in awhile. The girl's father finally got a little suspicious of the Major and cut up the field, so I could not land again, we did fly over the ranch again, and the Major jumped in a parachute, just to see the girl again. A lot of HOT AIR. He did write a couple of books afterward. One, Too Many Boats about officers missing too many boats and their experiences in the Philippines. The other, Army Girl was about a society girl in El Paso, Texas, whom the officer, including myself, dated and took to all the army parties. A wonderful good-looking young lady whom everyone liked very much. Major Clifford gave a party at Douglas, Arizona, and invited a lot of the girls from El Paso. She could not make the train, so I had to fly her to the party. Of course, her real name was not in the book.

Chapter Fourteen

In 1929, after enjoying the life at March Field, the beautiful climate, the beautiful surrounding country and the fishing, I was ordered to Crissy Field, Presidio of San Francisco with my friend, Lt. Ike Williams. My wife was staying with her mother in Oakland, and Ike's wife was with her parents back East, for the quarters at Crissy were not ready for us. Ike had bought a new Humpmobile auto, and I bought a new pair of shoes. Ike wanted to show off his new car to some old girlfriends of his, so we took them out to dinner one evening, After dining and dancing, we dropped my girl off at her apartment and then drove to the hotel where Ike's girl was staying and parked across the street. It was just outside the Stockton Street tunnel. I was lying down on the back with my new shoes off, for my feet hurt me, and Ike was talking over old times in the front seat, when, all of a sudden, the back door opened, and a man poked his head in, holding a gun on Ike. Of course, he had not seen me, I rose up and he turned the gun on me, then backed out, turned and ran down the street with me chasing him in my stocking feet. By the time I got back, the girl had gone into the hotel, and the clerk called the police. They arrived within minutes. How nice. A small story in the paper, no girls, but did say that I grabbed the gun out of his hand.

My Dad read the story over in Oakland and told me he thought I was a little crazy, but not enough to grab a loaded gun out of a man's hand, We were called on a number of occasions by jail officials to see if we could recognize the man, The last time we went, the police told us that if there was any doubt at all, not to recognize him for they had checked him out. He had been out of work for some time, and his wife was going to have a baby in about two weeks. It did look like him, but we said No.

We finally moved into very small quarters at Crissy Field, Ike two doors from us. Two stories with a coal-burning

furnace in the basement and a maid's room and bath.

I was O.D. (Officer of the Day) one evening, at home, and heard a crash of a car. I went to the door, and here was a car on the slope in front of Ike's house up against a pole. Just as I started out the door, I heard a pistol shot and then another one. By that time Ike was out, and we questioned the driver of the car. He said that he lived right outside the Presidio. His wife was away, and he had just written her a letter and went down to his car to go mail it. There was a man sitting in the front seat, pretty drunk. This chap asked the man if he would drive him out to the Presidio. He searched him and no weapons, took him to the gate of the Presidio and stopped. The chap wanted him to drive him to the car station, but when he got there, he had pulled a gun and ordered him to drive on. When he got in front of the officers' quarters, the driver noticed the chap look out the window, so he dropped the steering wheel and grabbed the hand that held the gun. There was a shot in the car that went through the top. By that time the car had run up over the curb and hit the pole. The driver was able to open the door, and they fell out. The gun fell out of his hand, and he turned and ran across the road, climbed between a barbed wire fence and disappeared. The man picked up the gun, and by the time he found out how to fire it, all he could see was a shadow, and he fired at it.

On the other side of the fence were some underground Coast Artillery gun emplacements. I had a flashlight, and Ike held the gun, an Army 45. We searched all the underground rooms, but no robber. That ended that.

Another time on my day of OD duty, I heard another crash and went to the door and a car was just passing, sounding like it had a flat tire or a fender rubbing on a tire. I went down to the car it had hit. It was Lt. Jimmie Cumberpatch's, and had the rear end all dented in. I had told Jimmie he was foolish to park out in front, for there was plenty of room in back of the quarters. Just as I started to leave, Jimmie and his wife, Louise, drove up in another car. God, was he MAD! I told him about the car that hit it, that it sounded as though it had a flat tire, and if he hurried up, he might be able to catch up with it. Just as he started out, I reached down and picked up the license plate of the other car. Jimmie took the license to the police station. They found out the address of the owner and went out to

his home. There was a car in the driveway with the front end dented in. He was in bed, and the police questioned him as to where he had been that evening—at home and had gone to bed early was his answer. What about that dent in the front end of his car? Oh, he had done that about a month ago. By that time, Jimmie could not contain himself any longer and pulled the license plate from behind him and said, "The next time you hit any car, do not leave your calling card." Seeing that he was caught, he and his wife were very insistent on paying for the damage, and the police did not carry it any further.

One of the duties of the 91st Observation Squadron, Crissy Field, Presidio of San Francisco, was to work with the troops stationed at posts in the 9th Corps area.

In 1931, I was assigned to take charge of this mission at posts to the North. I had three O-25 airplanes, three other officers, Lts. George Hansen, Paul Cullen and Clancy Fernanders, and two mechanics.

Our first stop was Ft. Lewis, Washington. The extra goodwill duties at this stop were to take some of the local officers for a flight which included rolling the wheels in the snow on top of Mt. Rainier. Next stop, Ft. George Wright, Spokane, Washington.

One of our missions there was dropping and picking up messages to and from the ground. The pickup was accomplished via a hook on a long rope from the plane which would pick up the message bag attached to a rope strung between two tall poles. George Hansen as pilot and Clancy Fernanders as observer were practicing this one afternoon and were being watched by me and two young teenage daughters of local officers. Clancy dropped a message to the girls stating that he was rather thirsty. The girls suggested we send him up a bottle of coke, so we put a cold bottle in the message bag. All set. The first pickup hit the ground—going too slow. The next was perfect. Clancy sent down a thank you note, but stated it was just a wee bit weak,

Our next stop was Ft. Missoula, Montana, with Major Gonzer in command. I was told prior to leaving Ft. George Wright that Major Gonzer was an avid fisherman and that the chief ranger of the Flathead National Forest had constructed a landing strip across the bend of a river, close to his head quar-

ters, sixty miles from any road. Major Gonzer had expressed his desire to fly into this area and try the fishing. The chief ranger had been trying to get an army plane to test the strip to see if large planes could use it to bring in firefighters.

We arrived at Ft. Missoula on a Wednesday afternoon, and as per usual, were invited to dinner at the C.O.'s quarters. During the course of the dinner, I indirectly bought up the subject of fishing and this landing strip in the forest. Right away, the Major was all enthused and wanted to know if we could fly in. Seeing it was good for the Forest Service and being we were temporarily under command of the Major we would attempt it, if he desired. OK, let's go in tomorrow morning. I told him that we really should work with his troops. Well, let's go in tomorrow afternoon.

We were led in by a local civilian pilot, inspected the strip, and agreed it would accommodate a large plane—the fishing was very good, too.

Such a good time was had by all that the Major suggested we fly in again Saturday morning and spend the night. I believed this could be done, and we could still keep to our schedule, which called for our being at the Fort in Salt Lake City on Sunday. George Hansen and I took off early Saturday morning with Major Gonzer and another passenger plus overnight supplies. I returned to Ft. Missoula for more supplies and on takeoff, hit a bad downdraft as I cleared the end of the runway that ended above a 200-foot drop into the river canyon, but with plenty of speed, I was not worried.

On arrival back at Ft. Missoula, the third plane, which had been left to work with the troops with Clancy as pilot, was not on the field. I found it in the hangar with a broken propeller. Clancy had fastened the charming wife of the C.O. in the back seat for a flight. He walked to the hangar and noticed a large steel box directly in front of the plane and knew he would have to taxi to the right to miss it. You guessed it. No flight for Mrs. Gonzer.

I loaded up with a captain and more supplies and took off for the forest landing strip. On the approach, I had to give it the gun to get above the bank and then floated, unable to use the brakes, then the point of no return. Remembering the downdraft, no area to ground loop, I saw these two large trees about twenty feet apart, so headed between them. A case of beer and two-dozen eggs on board and just one egg cracked, but the plane was a total wreck.

George Hansen and Paul Cullen, after flying all personnel and non-perishable supplies out, proceeded to Salt Lake City and completed the mission. I stayed in a tent at the ranger station for about ten days to dismantle the engine which had not been damaged, with bear, deer and elk around my tent every night.

On returning to Crissy Field, being supply officer, I submitted a survey report on the wrecked plane. A few days later, Col. McIntosh, the C.O., called me in an asked me if I had any money. What did he mean, money? It seems that Col. Lahm,

the air officer, and he, believing that the flight into the landing strip was more or less a personal fishing trip, had decided to disapprove the survey and recommend I pay eleven thousand dollars for the plane. (Imagine—eleven thousand dollars for an airplane.)

Oh, God! What do I do now. After a month or two, with letters to Major Gonzer and the chief ranger and being asked every time I saw the Brass, I went to a party at the Officers' Club at the Presidio one evening and saw the two of them standing at the bar (1931). As I approached, I saw them wink; then it dawned on me, and I called their bluff. The survey had been approved as presented, and we all had a rood laugh. But that hardly paid for the bad time they gave me.

Years, and I mean years later, at the National Daedalian Convention at Kelly Field, at which General Lahm was the guest of honor, I reminded him of this incident. He remembered it, and we had another good laugh.

The commanding officer of the 91st Observation Squadron at Crissy at the time I arrived there was a Mayor Jerry Brandt, another of the outstanding officers of the time. He was very sociable and knew most of the VIPs of San Francisco. I was Personnel Officer for some time, and of course, had a very competent sergeant as my assistant. At one time, he came to me and said we had overdrawn our ration allowance to the tune of nine hundred dollars. Oh, my God! I had to take it up with the C.O., and I told him that we had plenty of money in the squadron fund, so we decided that it would be wise to take it up with Personnel Headquarters at the Presidio. This I did. Seeing that we had the money, we were told to pay it back and nothing more would be done. Of course, this was with the Boss of personnel. Afterwards, one of the sergeants in Personnel Headquarters told me that if I had come to him instead of going to the top brass, he would have fixed it all up, and it would not have cost us a cent. I learned a lesson—start at the bottom.

I was later to take over the supply department, we had O-l9 aeroplanes which were not the best, but we managed to perform all the missions that were required of us, working with the other branches of the service stationed in the Bay Area at the time, and taking care of all the visiting firemen. Seeing as Crissy was the only field close to San Francisco, we had plenty

of them.

The O-19's were finally replaced by Dehavilands, with the liberty motor in it. We also had two amphibians, a one engine plane and a twin engine Loening with the motors on top of the single wing. We also got two O-35's, a single wing with a curve in each wing down to the cockpit. They were a very nice plane to fly, but I think the two we had were the only two ever made. I had quite a lot of time in these planes, and when they were transferred to the Engineering and Supply depot at Duncan Field, San Antonio, Texas, Don Muse and I ferried them there. A very enjoyable trip, I was one of quite a few officers at Crissy Field who belonged to the Quiet Birdmen—a national organization made up of aviators who could hold their liquor and keep their mouth shut. You had to have two hundred hours flying time, and you had to be a guest of another member for one year, attending the monthly evening dinners, and then, be voted in. If you received just one unfavorable vote, you were blackballed forever and could never join any of the loyal national organizations called hangars. The San Francisco Hangar held its monthly meeting at the St. Francis Hotel. The officers of Crissy Field would gather at Col. Jerry Brandt's quarters at about four and start the party with bathtub gin. About five-thirty, Jerry would call the San Francisco Police Department, and they would send out two or three motorcycle policemen, and they would escort us through town to the hotel with their sirens wide open. Always a GOOD time was had by all. Monty Mutton, a member, was the United States Department of Commerce Aviation representative on the West Coast, He had given his signature to Welch's grape juice to be used on the advertising of this juice. At the next dinner, a bottle of Welch's grape juice was put at each member's plate. The one in front of Monty's seat had been opened and a fairly strong shot of a laxative poured in. Monty had just returned from a trip up North, and being tired, he did not show. The head birdman called his home in Oakland and told him if he did not get over there in a hurry he would bring the party over to his home. He showed up about an hour later and drank all the grape juice. The laxative had no effect on Monty. Someone said that a little exercise would help it work, so we chased him around the room a lot, but still no effect. Something went wrong, but they say the next day he had to be

on the run from his office at the Oakland Airport to the John all day long.

One or two of the members got together and had a girl write a letter to Monty and had it mailed from Seattle, one of his frequent stopovers, to his home, The letter wanted to know what he had done with one of her stockings when he left a few mornings before, of course, his wife got hold of it, and they had a very hard time convincing the wife that it was just a fake.

The Fuller Paint brothers belonged to the San Francisco Hangar, and one of the parties was a weekend trip to their summer cabin on the shores of Gravely Lake some miles north of San Francisco, where the brothers, great polo players, sent their weary polo ponies. Saturday afternoon, with most of us feeling no pain, we organized a polo game. I was galloping along, and the ball rolled past and stopped just ahead of me, I made a swing at it and missed, of course, The horse, feeling me swing, looked ahead to see where the ball was; not seeing any ball, he knew I missed, and he looked around at me with the most disgusted look on his face. I believe the thought in his mind was, "What the hell is the matter with you." I do not know why the cabin was not burned down, for those who had not passed out were running around throwing fire crackers under the beds of those who had.

Mather Field at Sacramento had been a flying school during World War I and was more or less abandoned. The 91st Observation squadron used it as a bombing and gunnery range. The whole squadron moved up there for a week or two for maneuvers with bombing and gunnery practice. At the end of these maneuvers, the C.O. of the Presidio, General Miline Graig, the Air Officer on his staff, and Major Clarence Tinker, the temporary C.O. of Mather, held an inspection of what we had been practicing for a couple of weeks. They came to the bombing range to see how good we were. The pilots had been having a contest in bombing to see who was the best and to demonstrate in front of the inspectors. The PH's carried four twenty-five pound bombs under each of the lower wings. Lts. Ike Williams and Bobzien ended in almost a tie for first place. Ike's method was to get over the target at eight or nine hundred feet, put the plane in a vertical dive right at the target and release the bombs at three hundred feet. Of course, the bombs would keep

on going right down and hit the target. Bobzien's idea was to get at the same altitude and figure out just when to release the bombs. Ike won out, so he was demonstrating to the inspectors. He got in a vertical dive not realizing he had a slight tail wind, and released the bombs at three hundred feet. He was a little beyond the vertical, tried to pull out of the dive, but could not make it. Of course, the bombs were dummies, and the inspectors could stand about twenty-five yards from the target. Major Tinker remarked that if he got out of this alive, he would court-martial him for reckless flying. He hit the ground as he was pulling out, and the engine broke loose and flew through the air for over a hundred paces. Col. McIntyre remarked that he hated to go over and pick Ike up in pieces. When he got over to the plane, Ike lay there cussing to beat hell that the Goddamn plane would not come out of a dive. I had been flying, and just as I landed. I saw the ambulance take off. I looked out on the field and saw some dust rising just over a rise in the ground, so could not see the plane. A mechanic came up and said that Lt. Williams had just hit the ground from a three hundred foot dive. Lt. Bobzein landed alongside me, and as he came up to me, he said that he had seen the whole thing from the air, and Ike must be dead, The next time I saw Ike, he was lying on a bed in the hospital smoking a cigarette, still cussing the damn plane. He did rot have a scratch on him. How lucky can you get.

Years later Col. Ike Williams was in Panama, doing quite a bit of drinking and not doing his duty as he should. In those days, if an officer went wrong, he could be Class 9, and if the board so finds, he could be kicked out of the service without benefit of retirement. Col. Williams was so classified. The recommendation had to be approved by the Chief of Staff of the Army who happened to be Major General Miline Craig, He remembered the crash of Lt. Williams and wondered if that crash did not have some effect on him that caused his trouble, so did not approve the recommendation, but suggested he be given a thorough physical examination. Of course, Col. Williams was retired physically. That was the way general Graig operated. A hell of a decent officer.

The next year, the Air Corps organized a large maneuver including Bomber, Fighter, and Observation Squadrons from all over the United States. The 91st Observation squadron, sta-

tioned closest to Mather, was ordered there to prepare the Base prior to the arrival of the other flights. Lt. Bobzien was the photographic officer, and was expected to take hundreds of pictures. He had a Fairchild photographic plane, a single wing job with a cabin. He had a very small unit at Crissy, and could never get enough alcohol to develop the pictures. At Mather it was going to be a big mess, and as he always did, he contacted the local Prohibition Department and told them his troubles. They said that they were going to raid a still, the best in that part of the country, the following Saturday, and if he would send a truck out to where this raid was to take place, they would let him have some alcohol. He came back to the field with forty 5-gallon cans of the stuff. Major Tinker in command of Mather thought if the people found out he had that on the field, he would be in a mess of a hell. He ordered his Chief Flight Surgeon to get rid of it. Doctor Brown couldn't figure out how to do this, so at lunch that day he talked it over with some other officers and decided that he would pour it in a bathtub in the hospital starting at one o'clock. At one, an enlisted man would hand him a five gallon can, and he would jam an ice pick in the top, hold it over the tub for a couple of seconds, and throw the empty can out the door, and an officer would catch it. Then it was discovered that the enlisted men had crawled under the hospital, disconnected the drain, and caught all the rest of it. Major Brown certified that he had gotten rid of all the alcohol.

The maneuver was very successful, bombing raid, protected by fighter plane and observation plane finding the enemy. After three weeks, it ended in a massive fly-over of all planes passing in review above and in front of the VIP stand. All squadrons were ordered home, but seeing I had been the supply officer, I was left to clean up the MESS with a couple of other officers and a few enlisted men, five of them from Rockwell Field, San Diego. I was getting messages all the time from Rockwell to send the men back. I had no planes, but was finally able to get a tri-motor transport from March Field, California, with Lt. Buddy Maxwell as pilot and a mechanic. Buddy wanted to spend a night in San Francisco, but due to the Hell I was getting about these men, I asked him to take off the following morning. He told me that if he had any trouble, he was coming back to Mather, because he was not going to spend any money

taking care of six enlisted men. That day, a Saturday, started out nice and clear, but in the afternoon a very strong wind came up. Lt. Joe Hargraves had flown up in the single engine Fokker transport and wanted to fly back that Saturday afternoon with a general on board. The weather did not look too good, but I finally said OK.

I was dressing for a party that evening when I got a telegram from our communication center that a transport plane had crashed. Oh, my God! Here I had OK'd a flight in doubtful weather with a general on board. Thank God I found out it was not Joe who had crashed, but Ruddy Maxwell, down near Bakers field. He wanted help from me, but as I had no one I could send down there, and he was closer to March Field, I phoned the trouble there, and they said they would take care of it. I took off early the next morning and got down there, but not till a Lt. Blessly, the operations officer of March had arrived. Maxwell and Blessly hated each other's guts, Maxwell told me.

A blade of the right engine had broken off and set up a bad vibration in the wings. It looked like the end of the wings were vibrating five or six feet, and he had no control, except by leaning back as far as he could and pulling the control wheel tight against his chest; then, he could pull the nose up a little bit. It was flying straight, thank God, but right at the town of Bakersfield. He told the six passengers to jump, and he fought the controls to keep away from the town. He made a fair landing in a vineyard and kind of settled down; then, the tail of the plane raised up and moved around 90 degrees. When all was quiet, he heard a voice from the cabin say, "Are you all right, Lieutenant?" It seems that at one time, the mechanic had jumped from a burning plane and thought that if he had stayed in the plane, he might have been able to get the pilot out. So he braced himself against the sides of the cabin and was not hurt at all. Neither was Lt. Maxwell,

As he climbed out of the wreck, the sergeant came running up and said there must be another man in the plane, for there were supposed to be six jump, and he only counted five parachutes in the air. Buddy looked at him and asked him if he had counted his own chute. Was he embarrassed. Well, Lt. Blessly came up and without saying anything to Buddy, looked the ground over and said to him, "just look over here, Five rows

away there is a vacant row, and if you had just turned a little, you could have landed in this open area and not wrecked the plane." Buddy was silent. Blessly walked a little farther on, and here was quite a large open field. "My God, look at this field. Any good pilot would have landed here." Remember, Buddy was fighting the controls all the way down, trying to keep the plane away from the town. Buddy told me later that if there had been a rock handy, he would have killed the son of a bitch. Lt. Maxwell and his mechanic got a citation from Washington for their action in keeping the plane away from any buildings.

Chapter Fifteen

Back to Crissy Field. Took over the supply officer's job from Lt. Paul Wilkins. He told me that very shortly there would be a notice that Crissy would be allotted two thousand dollars to buy Tactical Gasoline that could only be used in automobiles while on maneuvers, and that there were eighteen hundred gallons of this gasoline in storage already at Crissy. I said, "For God's sake, what the hell do we want any more for?" He remarked that if we turned this two thousand dollars down and we ran out of what we had, they would not give us any more. If we needed it and they would not give it to us, we could not go on maneuvers. I checked the records and found out it would take us at least twenty years to use up what we had, so I turned it down.

Lt. Wilkins had a private secretary, and was she something! Big, fat and sloppy. Her papers were always dirty till she used the eraser. She would lean over, and one of her baggy breasts would fall out, and she would put it back in her dress. The rumor was that she was having love affairs in the back of the warehouse with a few of the enlisted men. She was a civil service worker, and you could not fire her unless she received three poor efficiency reports. Paul had put in three on her, but the last one, the C.O., Captain Kraus, changed to GOOD, so that washed out the first two. The chief telephone operator of the Presidio called me and told me that this secretary had called one of her operators a son of a bitch, and what did I want her to do about it. I told her to send the report in, and we might be able to fire her, and she could not get another job in the service. Captain Kraus called her in, and she said that she would resign, so Kraus tore up the report.

The squadron was ordered to send four or five planes to Salinas, California, to participate in maneuvers with the troops at Ft. Ord. It was quite a responsible mission, and Captain

Kraus did not like responsibilities, so he ordered me to command the mission. He asked where we would get the gasoline we would use there, and I told him we would buy it locally as we needed it. Well, he said that the regulations required that if we spent over five hundred dollars on the gasoline, we would have to let out bids on it. I told him that we would probably not use five hundred dollars worth, but he said that if we did, he would be in trouble. He called in Lt. Jack Upston, the operations officer, and explained the situation to him and asked him how much gasoline we would use down there. He said probably about ten thousand gallons. I hit the ceiling. I had to send out bids for that amount, and the Associated Oil Company had the lowest bid. In the three weeks we were there, we used about a thousand gallons. When we got back, I asked Captain Kraus what he wanted me to do with the rest of it. I told him I did not have any money to ship it to Crissy, and about the only thing I could do was to forward a letter to Washington, explain the situation, and ask for money. "Oh, my God! You can't do that. It would put me in a very embarrassing situation!" It sure would, the way I would have written the letter.

I finally said that I would go down and talk with a very good friend of ours, a reserve Air Corps officer who was in charge of the aviation section of the Associated Oil Company. I met with him and the local general manager, and as they knew we were going on the same kind of maneuvers at Ft. Lewis, Washington, he would let us have the gasoline on the same contract up there at one cent less per gallon. Very nice. I agreed to it, shook hands, and left. A few days later, Capt. Kraus asked me about it, and I told him the story. He asked me if I had gotten this statement in writing; that I didn't know civilian business. Emery Brontte, as I said, was a reserve officer and flying with the Reserve Corps out of Crissy, and we could take his word for it. Nothing doing; get it in writing. God, what a life. It would embarrass me to go down and tell them we could not take their word for it. I called Emery and told him. He knew Kraus, so he said to forget it, to send my assistant down, and they would have the paper all made out for us.

The next real large maneuver was at the Presidio of San Francisco. It included all the troops in the Army, Navy and 91st observation Squadron. The Brass did not believe we

had enough planes to take care of the situation, so ordered five marine pilots and planes from their base in southern California. It was really going to be something, and the flying was very involved. Captain Kraus, the C.O. of Crissy, was a little afraid of the responsibility, so took a two weeks leave and that left me in command. All of the pilots were very enthused about it. We had about ten pilots who slept at headquarters every night on the alert. We were spotting the enemy, observing the movement of troops, and adjusting artillery fire. One day, the commanding general asked me if I could send five planes in the air at three o'clock in the morning. There was an enemy fleet coming in, and he would like to know the exact position off it at that time. All of the pilots wanted to go, so I picked two Marines and three of our own by drawing straws. It was a very successful mission, even if the fog was bad, and we were complemented on the mission by the general. A Major Hume Peabody of the Air Corps was the Air Inspector, and he wrote a very complimentary report of the Air Corps actions, but he said that Captain Kraus was in command of the squadron. My name was not mentioned, and I asked him why. He said that poor old Capt. Kraus needed it, and I didn't. I am still mad at him.

We had a Sykorsky twin engine amphibian and a single engine Loening. I was sitting in my office that was close to the hangar one morning, when I heard quite an explosion. I rushed out and saw that the Sykorsky had blown up in the cabin. There was our only flying sergeant, lying dead on the cement alongside the right front side of the plane with his face just about blown off. The metal of the right side had blown off and hit him. He was holding a lighted cigar in his hand. The first thing I did was to get rid of that cigar. I didn't know what had caused the explosion, but a mechanic said there was another man in the cabin, and as I was climbing in, he came out, unhurt. He told us that he had taken the cover to the blieg off and was just starting to kneel down, when the explosion occurred and he was blown with it up against the top of the cabin. He just had a bump on the back of his head. The mixture of oil, water and air had reached the explosion content. We called for an expert from Oakland, and he checked the blieg of the other amphibian and found that to be within a degree of exploding.

Captain Jack Davies and I were at a conference at

Wright-Paterson. Taking off for our home base, we stopped at Chicago to visit the World's Fair. We had sent our civilian clothes to be cleaned, so were in uniform the afternoon we went to the Fair. A chap came up to me and called my name. I remembered him as the photographic officer at Selfridge Field in 1918. I asked him what the hell he was doing there, and he told me he had set up a photo booth to take pictures, but wasn't making any money. The only men making any were those who had the semi-nude girls in the Streets of Paris, so he went over to town, picked up a couple of very charming ladies and was making a little money. He took us through the Streets of Paris and introduced us to most of the friends he had made there. We were standing right in front of one booth with the owner ballyhooing about the beautiful, young, well-built model standing alongside the stand, wrapped in about thirty yards of three-foot cloth. As he was talking, he was unwrapping this cloth from around the girl. He came to the end of it saying, "Ah, here we are. All it will cost to go in the tent is ten cents, and someone will have the honor of pulling the last of the cloth from her body. It is only held by a safety pin on her shoulder, and there she will stand in all her beauty and glory." He had been holding the cloth in his arms, and he held it out, saying, "Hold this for me." As I said, we were right below the stand, and Jack just naturally reached and took the pile of cloth. Of course, there was quite a crowd around, and the man said, "Ah, here is a Captain in the U.S. Army Air Corps who will have the honor of giving the cloth the last jerk, and here she will stand in all her beauty for everyone who paid the ten cents to see." Of course, she had on a very tight-fitting, flesh-colored dress that showed all her natural curves, even to the large nipples on her beautiful breasts. Was Jack embarrassed. Remember this was 1932 or 33.

We spent a very pleasant weekend, but took it easy, for we had to fly home the following Monday.

We did a lot of flying between San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle. We had to stop en route at Medford, Oregon, to refuel. The field there was quite a ways from town, and we had no transportation, so finally the Army gave us a Dodge touring car, but no gasoline. I got the transportation department to fill up two 5-gallon cans and one 50-gallon drum and a pilot to fly it up to Medford in a transport plane that had no communication be-

tween the pilot and the cabin. One of the enlisted men wanted to go along, so OK. It was cold and foggy at Crissy, and the cans and drums were filled to overflowing. After take off and getting in the Sacramento Valley, where it was hot as hell, the pilot dropped down low, and the enlisted man, being on the alert, noticed the five-gallon cans beginning to swell. He realized the gasoline was expanding and would explode, spilling gasoline on the floor of the plane, seep through and land on the exhaust pipe that ran under the floor, and catch on fire. He figured for a while and watched through the window. When the plane was flying over a large, open field, he opened the door and kicked the cans out. A very intelligent young man.

There was a very charming young lady who attended most of our parties and was well-liked by everyone. She lived in an apartment almost on top of Telegraph Hill. Major Muse, our commanding officer, was flying Captain Chuck Clark to March Field, and after take off, he circled this girl's apartment house waving to her. He then checked all of the gasoline tanks finally turning the handle on to the main tank and started to adjust the air valve. As he pulled it out slightly, it seemed to open wide and let too much air into the carburetor, and of course, the engine cut out. He messed around with the valve, but could not get the engine started again, so had to land in the bay. There happened to be a police launch close by, and he landed right next to it. They climbed out of the plane into the launch, hardly getting their feet wet. Came back to the field, got another plane, and off they went, after wiring Washington his idea of the cause of the accident.

I got the Navy to drag for the plane. They picked it up and brought it to the Crissy ramp and we dragged it ashore. I was the first one to look it over and looking in the cockpit, saw that he had turned the handle to the gas tanks to the off position. Ordinarily, on this kind of handle, the thin end was turned to the position you wanted it. This particular handle was reversed. The thick end should be turned to the on position. Major Muse, not looking at it, reached down and felt for the thin end and turned that to the on position, and of course, it was turned to the off position, and with no gasoline, the engine would not run. I had our photographer take a picture of it, and when Major Muse came back, he wired Washington of the

wreck: Absolutely, Pilot Error.

In 1932, I was at March Field on some business when the Air Corps took over the air mail. Col. Arnold, being the ranking Air Corps officer of the West Coast, was in charge of the entire western division. He told his adjutant to wire Major Muse to move his 91st observation Squadron to Vancouver Barracks, Washington, just across the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon, and take over the route from Salt Lake City to Portland and Seattle. Col. Arnold was told that Don Muse was at March, and in trying to find him, found out that he had taken off about an hour before, and they were not sure just when he would be back at Crissy. So, Arnold told my old s.o.b. friend, Major John Doe, to fly up to Crissy to take command of the 91st Squadron and take it to Vancouver Barracks. That was sure one hell of a thing for Arnold to do. But, I think that I was the most important officer during that time—supply officer. Getting all the supplies we would need together, shipping them, getting settled, finding quarters for the officers in one of the local hotels, the enlisted men stayed at Vancouver Barracks, which was an Army post, hiring beautiful secretaries, not only for myself, but for the C.O. and his adjutant, who was Lt. Jimmy Cumberpatch. I had to hire three different girls for them before Jimmie found one that satisfied him, and she sure was a beauty.

The mission went very smoothly, for the weather co-operated with us, not like in the East where they had quite a number of crashes. The mail must go through. I was inspecting out route and had left Salt Lake City headed for Portland one beautiful day and thinking about other business and found myself kind of lost. I saw a small town below me and checked up on the map and found I was over Prosser, Washington. I almost landed to tell the townspeople that my great great grandfather had founded the town, but didn't think they would believe me, so gave up the idea.

Toward the end of this mission, some old friends came by to inspect, and we ended up at the hotel where the officers lived, telling a few lies. Major John Doe was there, and after a little libation, I asked him to admit his trip into Yew York City from Garden City with his girlfriend while waiting to go overseas, and how she had seen me sitting in the lobby, and they got back in the cab and left. That was twelve years ago, but he said

that was not him, and I must have someone else in mind, so I had to forget it.

The Air Corps carrying the mail was called off and back to Crissy. Of course, I, being supply officer, had to stay at Vancouver Barracks to clean up for a couple of weeks, pay all the girls and other bills and then back home.

Then there was the CCC, Civilian Conservation Corps, made up of teenage boys, one of President Roosevelt's pet schemes, and it was good. Young boys who had never been out of town were assigned to camps in the mountains, and I believe made some really outstanding citizens of the future. Major Ivan March was the flight surgeon of the 91st, and he was called on numerous times to fly to one of these camps on the West coast to take care of someone who had been injured. I, having had a lot of flying time in the transport plane known as the YIK, was almost always asked to fly him. On one trip into Nevada, we had to pick up a young fellow who had been blown up by dynamite. He was in very bad condition, his backbone exposed. We had to bring him back to Letterman General Hospital. On the way back, I was changing from one gas tank to another, and in doing so turned on to an empty tank, and the motor sputtered a couple of times. As I have said, there was no communication between pilot and passengers, so I could not tell the doctor everything was OK. After we got the boy taken care of, the doctor asked me about that miss in the engine, that he had looked around and saw we were over the mountains with absolutely no place to land, and got ready for a crash landing. I told him that I knew any jar would kill the patient, so why not jump in our parachutes? Oh no, we could not do that for we would get a hell of a lot of adverse publicity. From then on, I was not anxious to fly him on missions.

Doc March was a wee bit crazy on fishing, almost equaling my fishing craze. He had heard of a beautiful spot on the south slope of Mt. Whitney, Manacie meadows, so we flew up there in a DH-4. I finally found this quite large meadow. I looked it over and decided it was safe to land. I believe a jet could land on it, about six thousand feet in altitude. The only way of reaching it was by hacking in or flying, so you can imagine the fishing. Something out of this world. We spent two nights, with Doc doing the cooking.

On the next trip in on a Friday, Major Muse and Captain Upton wanted to join us on Saturday. It was getting late, so Doc cooked our supper, and then we saw this plane overhead and knew it must be our friends. They circled around and then took off. I do not know how they would miss our plane, sitting in the only level spot in the area. They came back a short time later, saying that they had landed in a town east of the mountains and found out just where Manacie Meadows was. Doc and I were having a rather dry evening, for he thought I would bring a bottle, and I thought he would. No bottle. The mountain water was very good though. Don and Jack had brought a bottle, and we had a few while Doc was getting the fish ready for their supper. After Doc and I had finished eating, I counted the remaining fish, and there were sixty-eight of them, eight, ten, and twelve inches long. The next morning there were just twenty of them left, so you can imagine how good they were. We did a wee bit of fishing Sunday, and did bring back a few extra limits.

Major March went down to March Field for a conference and while there, heard of a three thousand foot runway at the nine thousand foot comtrue line on the south slope of Mt. Whitney. Of course, he told me about it and talked me into flying him up there. Nine thousand feet is pretty high for flying, for the air at that altitude is very thin. Well, we went up there, and the runway looked in good shape, so I landed. It was within a mile of the Tunnel Range Station, and the first thing we did was to make a call on the chief ranger, enquiring about the fishing. He told us this was one of the very few places known where the Golden Trout were very plentiful, the best places to fish, and the nature of the country.

Fish, fish and more fish. So many, that the doctor thought we had better leave well enough alone and wanted to take off that next day about noon, which was a Saturday. It was HOT as hell, and the wind was swinging around the compass in all directions. That worried me a bit. The runway was short, so I suggested that we wait till later in the evening or early the next morning when the air was heavier. No he wanted to go, so I watched the wind sock, and every once in a while it would blow right down the runway. OK. I got all set, adjusted the air to the carburetor for that altitude, waited for the wind sock to show right down the runway, and gave it the gun. We got off

about halfway down, then settled back. At the end of the runway, we hit a little hump that sent us up in the air about twenty feet. Thank God, everything was OK. Then we hit a downdraft. Generally, at a lower altitude the down draft would cushion out, but not at nine thousand feet. Of course, with the FEW fish we caught, the plane was a wee bit heavy, and we hit the ground. We bounced over a few mounds and ended up in a ditch 180 degrees the other way with the fuselage broken in half right behind the rear cockpit. No one hurt.

In a wreck like this, the closest air field was supposed to take care of things. March Field was the closest, so I called on the ranger one line telephone and finally got hold of Major Arnold. I told him my trouble and that his engineer had built the landing strip, and requested he send a plane up there to take the Doc out. I would have to stay there and remove the engine, for that had not been damaged. He said he would see what he could do. He called back an hour later and told me he could not find any flyer to make the trip, and for me to take care of myself. I finally got in touch with Major Muse at Crissy, and he told me he would send a plane for the doctor. An hour or so later, I got a phone call from Lt. Jimmie Cumberpatch saying he was in Bakersfield, that clouds were covering the mountains, and he would go through Tahacapi Pass and try to make it in from the

Owens River Valley. A very short time later, we heard a plane overhead, saw it was an Army plane, and we knew that Jimmie must have found a hole in the clouds and come on in.

We were standing on the porch of the ranger cabin, and I looked toward the landing strip. It was covered with cattle being brought down from the higher pastures. I jumped on a horse and galloped up towards the strip, but Jim was diving down, trying to drive the cattle off the field. I found out later, that the mechanic in the rear cockpit was beating Jimmie on the head, pointing to me, hoping he would wait till I got there to be sure all the cattle had been driven away. But, no. Jimmie landed, and a small calf ran across in front of him, and he ran over it with his right wing. Oh, God. It did not do too much damage, just broke a couple of ribs and tore the fabric. The wing was the same type as mine, so we took the ribs out and fastened them in Jimmie's plane. Doc sewed it up and put adhesive tape over the tears, and away they went. The mechanic and I stayed up there about ten days, taking the engine out. This was quite a job, for the altitude was so high we could not work very long. We had to relax, and we figured the best way to do that was to walk along a stream with a fishing pole, we finally made it, though, and had a small civilian plane fly the engine and us to a small town in the Owens River Valley. It took him about four trips.

A few months later, I was at a party at March Field, and Col. Arnold asked me how I made out. I told him, and then opened my big mouth and asked him if the pilots at March were getting afraid to fly. A look of disgust passed over his face, and he turned and walked away. I do not believe GENERAL Arnold ever forgot that.

During that time, the Engineering and Supply Department of the Air Corps held a conference at their headquarters at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio, every year for all engineers and supply officers. The second time I attended one of these conferences, a Lt. Dick Lindsay was the Engineer officer. We alternated in piloting, and whenever he came in for a landing, he flew so slow that I thought he was on the verge of a spin and scared the hell out of me. I planned to bawl the hell out of him after we landed, but he made such a perfect one I just had to let it go. On a return trip, he was piloting, and I was dozing off with my belt unbuckled. We came over Love Field, Dallas,

Texas, and the wind sock looked as though there was a very strong wind on the ground. Later found out it was a stiff wind sock. Dick saw the sock, and he glided in too slow, and the plane lost speed, fell into a spin at seventy-five feet off the ground, and crashed. Mrs. Harry Wedington, wife of the commanding officer, came running out thinking it might be her husband, for he was flying at the time. She said it was the funniest sight to see 2nd Lt. Lindsay, years later a Lt. General, standing at attention with 1st, Lt. Harvey Prosser, blood streaming down his face, bawling hell out of him for landing so slow. They rushed me to a civilian hospital, sewed up the cuts in my face, pulled a tooth that had been broken off, the rough edge of which was cutting the underside of my upper lip. A friend of mine, Lt. Russell Cooper, assistant to the C.O., was with me all the time. My neck was hurting me quite a bit, so they took some X-rays, and Russell told me, after conferring with the doctors, not to worry, for they had two of the best doctors in Dallas working on me. After another conference, I asked Russell if I had a broken neck, and he told me the X-rays showed that I had a fractured vertebra. Well, they put me to sleep, and the next morning when the prints were dry, it showed that it was an old fracture. I think it must have happened when I was thrown out of a car and landed on my head over in Honolulu in 1922.

Lt. Weddington had hired two very beautiful special nurses for me, and after a week I thought I did not need them any more, so suggested to Harry that he might let them go. He said, "What the hell, they are good-looking and not costing you anything," so I had them for another week. In the meantime, I had written my wife back at Crissy in my own handwriting that I was in pretty good shape and would he home real soon. It was in the San Francisco newspapers, and another wife called my wife, sympathized with her, and ended by saying that it was too bad that Harvey had a broken back The day I got out of the hospital, a twelve-year old newsboy sold me a paper and said what beautiful black eyes I had. If I would give him two dollars and tell him the name of the chap who did it to me, he would get his gang together and beat hell out of him. No bad results for me out of this crash.

One day during a cold winter at Crissy, the operations officer received notice that my old friend, captain Charles

Douglas, was arriving with three Boeing Pursuit planes, P-261s, I think. I was on the field to meet them. Charles climbed out of the open cockpit of his plane in his shirt sleeves; the two young second lieutenants in their heavy leather flying suits. Charles introduced me, and I asked if he weren't cold. "Hell no, we old-timers can take any kind of weather." The young officers looked on in surprise. When Charles got up to my place, he stripped off his clothes including the two heavy red undersuits. He had forgotten his leather suits.

Two of the young bachelors flew up to Santa Rosa over a weekend to meet their girlfriends. One of the officers, a calm, innocent type, borrowed the other officer's helmet and goggles and took his girlfriend for a flight. In flying up a canyon, he did not see the high tension wires crossing the canyon, hit them, and both were killed. The other officer, who was the higher ranking one and who had lent the flying equipment, and, therefore, had authorized the flight, had to resign his reserve commission or be court-martialed for letting the junior officer make the flight, which was against regulations.

One day, Congressman Maas was flown in to Crissy in a trimotor Ford transport which was having engine trouble. This Congressman had a date with the Chief of the Air Corps and William Randolph Hearst at his San Simeon castle down the coast below Carmel. I was selected to fly him there that afternoon in our transport. I arrived over the castle on the western slopes of the coastal mountains, but the whole coast was covered with a solid layer of fog, so no landing. We spent the night in Salinas and took off early the next morning, clear as a bell. I found the field on the coast below the castle, was met by motorcycle security guards, and escorted up the winding road, through a fenced field where foreign animals roamed.

Mr. Hearst never got up before eleven, so his hostess escorted us on a tour of the castle, which is one of the noted landmarks of California. One ceiling he had purchased in a foreign country, and the government of that country would not let him take it out. It took him seven years to break up this ceiling into small pieces and smuggle it out.

His girlfriend, Marion Davies, showed up about ten, and I got her autograph. About eleven, Mr. Hearst showed up, and we were introduced to two young and very beautiful starlets,

who were playing a game of Acey-Deucy with dice on a small table between them. No bras, and as they leaned over to pick up the dice, you could see down to their navel—how beautiful! Mr. Hearst was a very tall man, and he was standing behind me. Every time one of these beauties leaned over, he kind of rose on his toes and had a nice look. I was on my knees praying that the congressman's plane would not arrive, and I would have to spend the night. We had a few cocktails before lunch, then his plane arrived, and he got a call from Los Angeles from the chief of the Air Corps that he could not make it up to the castle, and for him to meet him in Los Angeles. Off they went, and I hinted in every way I could think of, to be invited to stay overnight. No soap. Took off, flew low, waved to the beautiful starlets, and headed back to Crissy. I then learned that if a person gets to the Castle for any reason whatsoever, he is never invited to stay, but is expected to stay as long as he wants. Oh, God! Why hadn't someone told me.

The last mission I was assigned to was to operate with the Military Post in the Northwest. I took three other Pilots with me, Lts. Cullen, George Hansen and Hubert Simons, two mechanics, and three DH-4 planes. Our first stop was at Ft. Lewis, Tacoma, Washington. We worked with the troops in the mornings, and in the afternoons took some of the more interesting officers for flights, which consisted mostly of rolling our wheels, or almost, in the snow on top of Mt. Rainer. We lived in quarters about a mile away from the flying field, and the C.O. did not have the courtesy to furnish us transportation to and from. Early One morning, a reserve Officer on his two weeks active duty, stopped and picked us up. He said that he was going to be gone all day on a mission in a tank, and if we could take the time to drop him off at his station, we could have the car till we picked him up in the late afternoon. How nice of him. He was really a gentleman. He lived in Seattle and invited a couple of us to go to Seattle with him when he got off duty on Friday and spend the weekend there. Lt. Simons and I accepted, and he invited us to dinner Saturday evening. He had also invited a very beautiful blonde, supposedly for the bachelor, Herb. Well, Herb did not seem to take to her, so it was up to me to see that she was entertained. It was a VERY enjoyable evening.

The next stop was Ft. George Wright, Spokane,

Washington. The field was a mile or two away, and the C.O. there was nice enough to have a car assigned for our transportation. One morning, two teenage daughters of officers wanted to watch us fly. On the way out, both of them almost chain-smoked. I asked them if their parents knew of their smoking, which they did, and had limited them to four cigarettes a day. Good God! They had already smoked twice that number, and I asked them how come. They said they were borrowing some from tomorrow.

In 1934 I received orders for the Philippines, and that started another round of wonderful experiences.

It was a beautiful trip over by Army Transport, weather perfect. Think of it, nineteen days of relaxing compared to climbing into an airplane, taking off climbing above the clouds, landing in Honolulu three hours later, taking off again, climbing above the clouds and landing in Manila five or six hours later, all in the same day.

Of course we notified my wife's sister in Honolulu, whose home we had been married in, that we would be there a day and night. We did expect a nice day there with friends, BUT, the day before we arrived my young seven-year-old daughter was chasing a small boy thru a door and she stubbed her toe on the threshold and slapped her hand on the deck. The doctor took a look at it and said her wrist might be fractured. An ambulance met us at the dock and took her to the Army Hospital, Trippler General, and sure enough she had a slight fracture of the wrist. That ruined our day but not the evening party.

Boarded again the next day. We got in the hot tropics, and one of the more skinny wives dressed during the day in shorts and a halter with about an inch covering her baggie breasts. Of course, one would fall out every once in awhile, if she had been good looking it might have been a nice sight.

The lounge on board was very comfortable, no air conditioner there. Coats and neckties worn after five p.m. One evening four of us officers got up a bridge game and about nine o'clock. It was VERY hot and no one else being in the lounge we took our coats off. As we finished the game the Adjutant came and told us we were breaking regulations being in there without our coats on, and for us to report to Commanding Officer the next morning. This we did, and we got a little Hell from him

with a twinkle in his eyes. He told us we were showing disrespect to the ladies being in there without our coats on. I almost asked him what Mrs. So-and-So was showing the gentlemen running around half-naked during the day, but thought better of it. We finished the trip in great style.

We were assigned very nice quarters on the second floor of a house on the base at Nichols Field, and I was given command of an observation squadron. The regulations called for a major to be in command, so I was promoted to a Temporary Major with pay. We were flying very old and weary 0-19's. Life was really very pleasant—on duty till one o'clock, golf in the afternoons, and numerous parties. There did not seem to be prohibition over there so everything was enjoyable.

A notice came out on the bulletin board that the Philippine Government wanted a U.S. Air Corps Officer with a pilots rating to organize and train a Philippine Air Force. The Philippine Islands were governed by the United States with a Governor General at that time. Mr. Frank Murphy was the Governor with a Colonel Hayden as his Army Liaison Officer. I saw this notice but did not consider it for I would have to give up my temporary command of the squadron and my rank as major and move off the post. One Sunday morning I ran into Major Hasty, C.O. of Nichols and Captain Russell Maughn, who was Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics for the Philippine Government. They asked me why I did not take that job, that I would be organizing a nation's Air Force and there was seven dollars and fifty cents extra every day. My God, I did 't know that so I thought it over and took the job. A week or so later Captain Maughn's time was up on the Island and he was ordered home. He did not believe that his assistant Air Corps Officer would be capable of handling the position so he asked me if I would rather have that position and in thinking it over thought that it would be a more interesting, and at the same extra pay, so I took the job. Captain Jerry Lee took the other job.

The bureau was under the Department of the Public Works with an office in the Post Office Building in Manila. There was a Philippine as assistant, a Doctor Zero, who had a degree in Aeronautical Engineering from the Soburn University of France, an engineer and four or five clerks. The job consisted of running the civilian aviation, constructing an airport at the

capitol of each Province in the numerous Islands, appointed representative of the U.S. Bureau of Aeronautics, giving out civilian pilot licenses, and seeing that the local airlines complied with local and U.S. regulations.

There was also a twin engine Loening Amphiam plane at Nichols, seeing that I had quite a few hours as pilot of this plane I was called on to pilot it on numerous occasions. One of the trips was to fly Mr. Hayden, the assistant Governal General, on an inspection trip to the Leper Colony, located on the Island of Palawan, where there was also a Penal Colony. There were two other officer pilots with me. When we landed on the small harbor and taxied up to the dock there was a group of school children with a large banner stating "Welcome, Vice Governor Hayden" and of course, all the VIPs of town, including three doctors of the hospital. I had no more than greeted everyone when one of the doctors asked me if I played bridge. There were only three on the Island who knew how to play, so every spare minute the three got me involved in a bridge game, even at the dance party I could only dance when I was dummy.

I accompanied the inspection team to the leper hospital and boy was that something. The sight of some of the patients with ears off, noses nothing but a hole in the face, fingers gone. It was sure nauseating. We finally came to a closed door and I asked what was in there and one of the doctors told me that this room was where the bad cases were. I excused myself and left before I embarrassed myself.

The Philippine Government had one of the best penal systems I had ever seen. Any criminal who spent three well-behaved years in the prison in Manila was entitled to be sent to Khia Island where they could have their wives, a Nipa shack and a small plot of ground to raise their own vegetables. We inspected this set up, and it was perfect. They had a boat and three or four prisoners would take this boat on a fishing trip and be gone for a week or two, coming back loaded with fish.

At the farewell party and dance one of the other officers, Lt. Tittus, was dancing with a very beautiful young Philippino girl, and of course, holding her very close, he asked her what was a "good looking girl like her was doing in such a miserable place." She said that her husband was an inmate of the penal colony. He kind of pushed her away a little and asked her what

her husband was in for and she said that he had murdered a couple of men in Manilla. He said, "Oh, let's go and sit down."

Later on I went down to another penal colony out of the city of Davdo on the Island of Mindanao. I was with the local manager of Pan American Airlines, Mr. Van Zandt. We were driven to a river where a boat was waiting for us, went up the river through the jungle, monkeys screaming at us, then on a narrow gage train to headquarters. It was another outstanding place, no wives though. They were developing different kinds of vegetables and fruits. It was rather late when we left in the boat the next day. It got dark and we got stuck on a sand bar. After a great deal of effort we got off and finally met the car again. There were four men in the crew of the boat and we found out that three of them were later murdered.

On another occasion I was asked to fly down to three miles off the last Island to the south and pick up General Frank Parker, who was the United States Army Commanding General of the military in the Islands. He had been hunting big game in India and was coming back on a Shell oil tanker, but he did not want to spend another couple of days on the boat so he wired for the Amphibian to meet him three miles off the southern most island. I landed in a small bay close to the last outpost of the Philippine Scouts, spent the night, got up the next morning and found the boat the general was on. It was a beautiful calm day so I landed real close to the boat. The general was rowed over, climbed in and we had no trouble taking off.

Chapter Sixteen

In 1936 I became a member of The Order of Daedalians. When the Armistice was signed on 11 November 1918 there were about thirteen thousand heavier-than-air pilots in the U.S. Army, Navy and Marine Corps. In 1933 a group of 1st World War pilots on active duty at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Ala. formed a club and named it The Order of Daedalians, in memory of the first man to fly.

In this position as Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics I had to travel around the Island quite a bit inspecting landing fields and sites for new landing fields. Being a member of the Army Air Corps I used the plane of Nichols Field on these trips till some brass said that I could not use these planes for Philippine Government business, so I bought my own airplane with Philippine Government money, of course. A single engine Wace Monoplane cabin job carrying the pilot and three passengers. How nice.

A Mr. L.R. Nielsen was trying to buck the big three in the mining game and used to charter one of the civilian planes for trips to his mines on other islands. One of the big three owned these planes and the only civilian landing strip in Manila. When Nielsen began to get too strong there was never a place available for him, so he said he would buy his own Damn airplane, which he did, but when it arrived this same VIP said he could not use his landing field. So he said I will build my own landing field. He came to me for permission, and we decided on a real large field close to Ft. McKinley. I believe this field is now the main landing field of Manila, greatly expanded though.

I became well acquainted with Mr. Nielsen, much to my sorrow, and of course bought some stock in this company. He took me through one of his copper mines that had been built by the Spanish missionaries a good many years back. There was a tunnel about two miles long and when I came out my hat and

shoulders were covered with soot. I asked him how come, and he told me the missionaries had built this two miles by heating the rocks with a fire and then throwing cold water on them and they would crack, so they could pry them down with crow bars. Imagine, two miles more or less.

One of the regular stops for all army planes and myself was at Bulawan, Mindine. There was a Philippine Scout post there with a Captain of the Scouts in command. He and his wife lived on the base and anytime he heard the motor of the plane he knew it would land at his base so he would get out a bottle of scotch and ice, plus if it was around noontime, something to eat. A HELL of a nice chap. He was up in Manila at one time, and I met him and invited him to my home for a drink or two, but he would not accept the invitation. I could tell by the way he acted and talked that he thought it was not right for him, as a Philippino, to visit the home of an American and high in the Philippine Government. I tried to tell him of his courtesy when we landed at his place, but no he would not accept.

My office was on the third floor of the Post Office Building and after a lunch break I would go in the basement to take the elevator and there would be a lot of young Philippino clerks waiting and when the elevator stopped they would push ahead of me in uniform, so I got in the habit of staying back til they all got in. One time the only other man waiting for the elevator was an old Philippino and as was my habit I kind of waited for him to go in, but he did not so I looked over at him and he bowed to me and stood back for me to go in first. That was the respect of the older Philippines had for the Americans.

I was to inspect some property at a Provincial Headquarters about forty miles from Manila that I was going to buy for an airfield. I let my chauffeur go and drove up there myself. After the meeting with the Provincial Engineer and others we were going out to look at the field. There was no other car but mine, and just as we were to leave there was a little conference of the Philippinos. Soon one of them came over to me and asked if I would mind if he drove my car. He said that the man and his wife who owned the land were OLD peons and if I was driving they would think I was the chauffeur and I would lose face with them.

Bulawan was in the Moro Country and at one of my

stops there I was invited to a Morro wedding. It was a rather impressive ceremony with all of the VIPS of town attending. Another time one of the young boys had a spider monkey on a long leash attached to a four-foot stick. He was a cute little thing and seemed to like me. I thought how much my daughter would enjoy it and made some kind of remark to that effect and the monkey was presented to me by the mayor of the town. I was reaching for my wallet when the Captain of the Scouts grabbed by arm and said not to offer any money for he would be insulted. My daughter had the monkey til we left the island.

One time a Doctor Collins, who lived in Iloilo, invited my family and me to a Sunday lunch on another island. My son did not want to go for some reason, but my nine year old daughter and my wife flew down in my plane. It was a very enjoyable time, even petting his fifteen-foot pet python. It was a beautiful day, not a cloud in the sky. On the way back I asked my daughter if she would like to pilot the plane. She sure would, so I put her in the pilots seat and she flew the plane for forty-five minutes. Of course her legs were not long enough to control the rudder so I kind of helped her out with the rudder on my side.

Chapter Seventeen

A very wealthy sugar planter by the name of Lopez owned and operated the airlines from Manila to Davao on the southern side of the Island of Mindine, using very old converted bombers and a couple of smaller planes for shorter routes. I received a letter from a Scot in business in Iloilo that he had flown back to town from a short trip, that the pilot of the plane was a STUDENT pilot, absolutely against regulations. I had to go down and investigate.

I could take it to court and Mr. Lopez could be fined up to ten thousand dollars. No one of the company said they knew anything about it and the page of the planes log book for the day of the flight was torn out. No concrete evidence whatsoever. I ran into Mr. Lopez one day and he asked me how I was getting along on the investigation.

I looked at him and said, "You know Damn well how I am getting along." He said, "I sure do and if you threw it in the hands of the court in Manila I will make a laughingstock of you up there." So what could I do, I went to the Scot and told him my troubles and he was agreeable too that we drop the whole thing.

In 1935 the Philippine Islands became an independent nation and a Mr. Manuel Cazone was elected president. The inauguration ceremonies were really impressive. Some time before the ceremonies the Governor General held a staff meeting which I attended. One of the questions to be decided was whether the government was to pay for the liquor for all of the VIP's including Congressmen and Senators from the United States. It was decided that they would have all the free drinks desired. My wife and I were invited to sit on the stand and attend the reception after. When we returned home there was a party going on in the flat below with a congressman and senator from Chicago. It was rumored that the congressmen had been

drunk from the time he left the USA and was still feeling no pain. I got talking to him about his election and he told me that the Al Capone's Gang had put him in, and that if he did not do as the gang ordered him to do on some bills in congress they would kill him. How nice.

The senator had sat at a card table in another room with three ladies for quite a while having refreshments and every time I looked in one of the ladies were telling the senator what to do. I later asked him if he did not get bored to death listening to them. He remarked that I would be surprised to know that in a group like that every once in a while one of them will come up with a very good suggestion that he would make a note of.

The Governor General, Frank Murphy was appointed the High Commissioner of the Philippines.

There was a Japanese editor from one of the larger cities of Japan who had been invited and flown down in his own plane, with the pilot sitting quite a way back on the fuselage. The only landing field they could land on was the civilian field and that was just a long strip of grass. The pilot could see the land, but when he hit the ground the front end of the plane was so high he could not see where he was going and before he stopped he ran off the strip and as I watched I was sure he was not going to stop before he ran into a ditch. Thank God he made it. The pilot's name was Ocura, a very short chap who could not talk English very well. The editor could. I met them and took them into their hotel and later on he took a group of us to a very nice dinner.

The pilot came to me and told me that he was afraid to take off on the civilian field loaded as he would be with gasoline enough to get him back to Japan. He asked if he could take off from Nichols Field. I could see no reason why not but of course I had to ask Major Hasty, the Commanding Officer, if it was all right with him. He said, "Hell No," the Japanese would never let a civilian plane land and take off from one of their army fields. A few days later I had some business with General Parker, who was home with a broken shoulder, and he asked me how the little Japanese was getting along. I told him his troubles and the General said, "Sure let him land at Nichols." I told him what Tom Hasty had said and the General replied, "Just because they are Damn fools is no reason for us to be." Send Tom in to see

me. And of course the Jap landed at Nichols and got off loaded to the limit.

I said that he had a broken shoulder. Well he was a Cavalry Officer, and a polo player and had leveled off the end of the flying field at Nichols and made a polo field out of it. He had also built an officers club right on the edge in front of the field. The Carabow Walle Club it was called. On one of his evening rides with friends around the outskirts of the Field, coming back home they had to come around a very dark corner of the Field. There was a large pole at this spot with guy wire holding it up. The Sentry was a pretty wise chap and as the first horseman came up he threw his flash light on this guy wire and as the flash went on the horse reared and almost threw the rider. He gave the sentry Hell and told him not to flash the light any more, and of course the next rider was General Parker and his horse hit the wire, the General was thrown off and broke his shoulder and boy was there Hell to pay. I pitied the first rider.

In building the club house the General used all army equipment, then he was transferred home he took the air conditioner equipment that had been installed in his civilian quarters back to the states packed with his furniture. Later on he was called for both of these. I was asked to write a letter stating what a beautiful club it was and how much all army personnel around Manila used it. I heard later that it cost three thousand dollars. What a shame.

The Pan-American Airline had been planning for some time to start a route from San Francisco to Manila. I got word that the first flight was to be the week following the inauguration of the new president of the Philippines. In one column of the local newspaper it stated that the plane would land on Thursday, Thanksgiving Day and right in the next column was the statement that it would land on Friday. I called the local representative, Parker Van Sandt and he told me positively it would land on Friday. Also that a letter from President Roosevelt to the president of the Philippines, Manuel Queson, was the first Airmail letter to be delivered. I made arrangements for the Post Office to set up a sub-station on the dock where the plane was to land, in the water of course, for it was a Sea Plane. On Thursday morning Colonel Manly who was in the G.G. Staff called me and asked about the official introduction of the crew.

He knew of the plans I had made to deliver The Letter to the President of the Philippines and of course introduce the crew.

Colonel Manly told me that the crew would not be introduced to the President til they were officially introduced to the Night Commissioner, who had been appointed to that position by the United States and was number one man of the Philippines. My God, I always thought a President was always number One. I went down to the hotel and talked with Colonel Manly, and it was finally agreed that I could carry out my plans.

The plane landed in the water close to shore. It was a seaplane. The crew came ashore amid the cheers of quite a few spectators. I welcomed the crew and the pilot, a Captain Musiek who had the letter from President Roosevelt. We went out to President Queson's Palace, introduced the crew and the letter was handed over.

The following Sunday I was at the Manila Hotel talking with the crew when The High Commissioner came by and stopped. Of course I had to introduce him and before we shook hands with each other he remarked, "This is not an official introduction." That's high politics I guess.

The plane flew off again back to the U.S. a few days later. Then the true story came out. At first it was supposed to make the trip the day the President was inaugurated. Feeling that there might be conflict about the attendance, Pan-Am postponed the trip a week, and was supposed to land on Thursday. When they heard of the arrangements that had been made for Friday they delayed a day in Guam, telling the passengers that Pan-Am wanted to serve them a good Thanksgiving dinner.

Later Pan-Am extended their line to Hong Kong. With a flying boat stationed at Manila for that flight, with the chief pilot, an old friend of my Border Days, Cecil Sellers. Some time later Captain Musiek and Cicel Sellers flew on an exploratory trip from Manila to New Guinea and were lost en route. The only evidence was a bottom of a Pan-Am suit found in the stomach of a shark caught along the route they had flown.

Some time later I was relieved of the job but was told not to take any other job for I would be called back as Chief of the Bureau. During my absence Captain Jerry Lee, who was training the Philippine Air Force took over the bureau. The main airline from Manila to the south was using old converted

bombers and were in very poor condition. On one flight from Iloilo the pilot flew through a bad rain storm. The engine cut out and he went down in the water with seven passengers on board. Five of them got out and the pilot swam back into the cabin and rescued the other two passengers. Captain Lee blamed him for flying through the rain and grounded him indefinitely. I complained to Jerry and thought the pilot's bravery in diving back for the other two should be taken into consideration. But I was out.

Some time later I was called back as the Chief. In the mean time, General Douglas MacArthur was assigned to the Philippine Government as Chief of Staff of the Philippine Army and any U.S. officer on duty with that government had to be on General MacArthur's Staff. So when I took the job over again I had to report to him. We had quite a little talk on what my job consisted of and at the last he told me that I would get a letter from The Dutch Airlines that was flying from Amsterdam asking permission to extend their line into Manila. General McArthur told me I was to disapprove that request. I argued with him that it should be approved for it was the only missing air link around the world. He said that if we let them extend their route we would have to let the Japanese in. I asked him why not let the Japs in, the U.S. Air Corps did not have too much to do and could meet the Japanese plane as it came into Philippine territory and escort it into Manila. That they allowed the Japanese coaling ships to come in and tie up at the docks of the very important island of Corregidor, "Yes but we have sentry patrolling the dock where they tie up." Of course I did not tell him what was going thru my mind, a Jap sailor could dive off the other side of the ship, swim around and land wherever he wanted to and search the island. He said that we would not be there too long and the Japanese could get permission to extend their line to Davao which was on the southern tip of the southmost island. Well, he agreed to let me approve this request but for me not to stick my nose in any international business. Of course the request was disapproved higher up. I do not think that the President dared make any important decisions without the advice of the General.

When I took over again I insisted the Mr. Lopaz who owned the airline should purchase a new airplane for the route

from Manila to Iloilo and on to Davao. He did buy two more other old bombers and when Mrs. Lopaz saw them she ordered them destroyed. He finally bought a twin engine, twelve passenger amphibian.

It was shipped to Manila and assembled on the docks and put in the water. On his first flight he wanted to land at Nichols Field and I could see no reason why he couldn't. The morning of the flight I was given an order from General Holbrook, Chief of the Philippine Department, to the effect that the airplane would not land at Nichols. I took my time getting out to where he was to take off from and by the time I got out there he had taken off and there was no way for me to tell him he could not land at Nichols. That did it. Colonel Sneed was air officer on the General's Staff, and he called me saying the General was up in arms for he had received a letter from Mr. Lopaz inviting him out to Nichols to take a ride in this beautiful plane. How nice. Colonel Sneed told me that the General had ordered him to issue orders relieving me of my job and to return to the U.S. on the next transport. I went over to the Colonel's office and asked to see the General. Nothing doing until after a long argument. Finally I got in to see him and told him all about my job and responsibility I had. That lasted about half an hour and I asked him if I could stay. No. Another half an hour and he said that he would reconsider it and let Colonel Sneed know of his decision in a couple of days. Sure enough Colonel Sneed called me about three days later and said I had talked myself out of it. Very nice.

There was a Mr. Crawford manager of the Del Monte pineapple plantation on the Island of Mindanao on the direct airline from Manila to Davao. Apparently Mr. Lopaz did not like Mr. Crawford and refused to stop at the Del Monte plantation. Crazy. On the inaugural flight I was invited to accompany some other VIP's on the trip. On the way back the pilot, Hal Sweet, called me up to the front cockpit and showed me a report of a typhoon about to hit Manila and asked my advice. We were right over the Del Monte plantation and I advised him to land there. He said that he would have to get Mr. Lopaz's permission, so I went back and talked with him, if they did not land there they would have to fly clear back to Davao. He gave permission to land and during a couple of days there we were highly

entertained, and Mr. Lopaz and Mr. Crawford became friends. Mr. Lopaz made the plantation a scheduled stop. Funny how things work.

Chapter Eighteen

Early in the year of 1936 I took a month leave from the Air Corps, my wife and I planned to visit China and Japan. I did not want to lose the ten dollars a day so I received permission from the Chief of the Department of Public Works who gave me a letter requesting that I inspect the airports in Japan. About five officers and their wives took an army transport from Manila to the harbor at Teintsin just below Peking. The harbor was covered with ice so it could not reach there but docked at Singtao. A special train had to be arranged to bring the passengers from Peking to Singtao and was due in about six o'clock. Of course we had to vacate the cabins so the orderly could clean them for the passengers who were on their way back to the States. A captain was in charge of the Chinese train and sent it to the train yard for refueling. While we were waiting for it to return he told us of the trouble he had coming down from Peking. It was freezing cold and the passenger cars had no heating connections with the engine. It seemed that there were two new baggage cars that were connected between the engine and the other cars and the steam lines were of different make so could not be connected to the passenger cars. The Captain talked with the engineer and asked him to put the baggage cars at the end of the train and the passenger cars connect to the engine. Oh no, that could not be done, baggage cars always connected to the engine. We finally talked him to do this and it was much more comfortable.

The train was expected back by nine o'clock but at nine thirty, ten o'clock, no train. The Captain went up to the yard, found the train but no crew. He looked around and found them asleep in a little hut. He woke them and asked what in Hell was the matter. They said, "Water hose all froze up so we go to sleep."

The home bound passengers took over, and the ship

took off and left us wandering around the streets of Singtao and freezing to death. The train finally showed up, and we took off for Peking about two in the morning. My wife and I got off at Teintsin and spent two days with some friends. Of course a Chinese merchant showed up and we started buying the Chinese junk we planned on. Then on to Peking to be with the rest of the bunch.

There was a fur dealer in Peking who catered to visiting firemen and he always gave a real old style Chinese dinner, bird's nest soup, sharks lips, eggs a thousand years old, etc. Mrs. Wurtsmilh, wife of the Captain, asked the waiter, "Are these eggs really a thousand years old?" "No," he said, "these are only about eight hundred years old." She said, "What the hells the difference, two hundred years."

We bought four bedroom rugs, a large dining room rug and a living room rug. All hand made and cost us about three hundred dollars, and dishes, etc.

Before we left for China four of us officers wanted to visit a Chinese Girl House. My rickshaw boy could speak and understand a little English so I told him where we wanted to go, it was after dark and cold as Hell. "OK, we go." He stopped in front of a large store and I asked him what for. He said, "This is were we get tea." "We don't want tea, we want to go to a Chinese Girl House." "You give me twenty sen and I go get you Pep tea." I did, and he brought back four small packages of Pep tea. We finally ended up at a very old building, went into a room where there were three small Chinese girls who did not look over thirteen years old, and wrapped up in old clothes so you could hardly see how they looked. They giggled and we tried to talk to them, no understanding whatsoever. Finally I asked my boy how much it would cost us to stay with these girls. He went over and talked with them, came back and said, "Six mex." Meaning six Chinese dollars, at the rate of exchange at that time it would mean twenty-five cents in our money. I said to him "Six mex for each one?" And he said, "No, six Mex for all four." Of course we piled in our rickshaws and took off.

After touring The Great Wall and a few other famous places we took off for Japan. The China Sea was covered with ice and we had to plow thru that ice almost all the way to Japan.

Of course we bought more Japanese Junk including another set of hand painted china. The editor of the Keyto newspaper that I had helped during his stay in Manila for the Presidential Ceremonies, invited us down to his city to a baseball game. The wife of the commanding officer of Nichols Field, Mrs. Tom Hasty was with my wife and me on the entire trip. Her husband did not want to make it so Mrs. Hasty was always, throughout the trip in China and Japan, considered as my wife number two, by rickshaw boys and servants in the hotels. Anyway we had very VIP seats at the ball game and given a very long write up in the newspaper, all in Japanese. After the game we went to a Japanese theater. The young pilot who flew the plane to Manila was with us. I counted one hundred very beautiful well-built girls on the stage at one time. They put on a Japanese show and dance dressed in native customs and then an American dance dressed, if you can call what they had on a dress. Very beautiful. Then to a fancy Japanese dinner. On the way to the dinner I said to the young pilot, "Oh you have very beautiful girls on the stage." He said, "Oh yes, after dinner you take missy back to hotel and we go behind stage." Much to my sorrow it was rather late as we finished dinner and feeling kind of exhausted, I did not want to disgrace the American tourist, so did not accompany him back stage.

I tried to do my duty and inspect the landing field at Tokyo so went out to the airport. The office of the airport was up stairs, as I went up the stairs, there was a small Sicilian plane

landing and I walked by the office that I thought I should go in to watch the plane land. As I went by, a young Japanese came out and asked my, "What you do up here?" I tried to introduce myself and reached in my pocket for the official letter when he said, "You not allowed up here, get out." I pulled out the letter, tried again to tell him who I was, but nothing doing. "You get off here." He grabbed me by the arm and almost threw me down the stairs. That was that. I almost went to the American ambassador but thought, "Oh what the Hell."

We were to sail from Yokahama and arrived a day early. By that time I was a little tired of Japan so just wondered around the streets. When I got back to Manila I found out that in Yokahama there was a Japanese bath house where very good looking girls gave you the bath. Why aren't these things advertised.

We took a President Liner from Japan to Hong Kong and toured that city for a couple of days. Back to routine duty again. I tried to get all of our purchases in duty free BUT. Up till a short time before the Navy would bring them back on one of their transports into their Navy Yard and of course the custom officials never inspected the Naval ships UNTIL some wife bragged about how much she brought in duty free and that was that.

Chapter Nineteen

I had been planning on constructing a landing field at the provincial capital of one the providences on the Island of Mindanao so I got permission to use the Air Corps amphibian as there was no landing field there. I took a co-pilot with me, and we landed in quite a large river just above a road and a railroad bridge. The banks were lined with natives and the current was carrying us down to the bridges, I climbed out on the wing trying to get the people off the banks so we could taxi to an anchorage but no, we just had to mow them down. No one was hurt though. Of course this was the first airplane they had ever seen and in walking into town a little girl caught hold of the copilot's hand and kissed the back of it with a look of wonder in her eyes.

The Provincial Engineer had picked out a sight about seventy miles out of town and the next morning we started out to look it over. Of course no road, so we drove to a river, carried across piggyback and then rode on the backs of water buffalos till we got tired and then walked awhile. On the way out quite a few natives passed us walking into town with produce on their heads or backs. The sight picked out was really exceptionally fine for a landing field, so I decided to construct it on this land. The native who owned the land would sell it at a very reasonable price. This of course was due to the fact that wherever a landing field was built the Bureau of Public Works would build a first-class road.

Back in town an American came to me and told me of a parcel of government land only six miles from town would be an ideal place for the field. I inspected this sight and found it as good as the other and all that would have to be done was build a bridge from the road across a ditch. So what could I do, but change my mind. The next morning the man who owned the land twenty miles out of town came to me and said that he

would deed the land over to the Government. I could not agree to this for it was much further out of town and would cost much more to build a road to it. A few days after I got back to Manila this same man came into my office and offered me five thousand pasoes to put the landing field on his land, that it would improve the entire area having a road for the farmers to use. I went into the office of the Chief of Public Works and explained the deal to him. He told me that they had plans all drawn up for a road in that area, but there was not enough population as required in that area. He looked up the plans and said it would cost three hundred thousand pasoes to build the road, and said that if he had enough money for it he would like to see me build this field. He called in his finance officer and he reported that there was not enough money in the road department. So too bad for the land owner.

The tour of duty for the Military in the Philippines was three years. I got one extension of a year and was asked to stay another year but the Commanding General, General Holbrook said "NO." My last flight in the little Waco was taking a VIP English man who had been wounded, from Manila to Bagiue. General Holbrook was at the field when I landed greeted the Englishman and sent him up to the hotel in his car. When he left the General looked at the plane I had and asked if he could inspect it, "Yes of course," and then I remarked, "Now you can see why I would like another year." He said, "You certainly have had three years of wonderful duty so why not let some one else take over?"

Office of the Governor-General
of the Philippine Islands

Manila, November 14, 1935.

My dear Major Prosser:

On the eve of my retirement as Governor-General of the Philippines, I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the very helpful services which you have rendered as adviser on aviation to the Philippine government. You have been on duty at a most critical time in the development of aviation in the Philippines.

During your tour of duty with this government, the development of aviation has made remarkable progress, and I feel that a large part of the credit for the progress which has been made is due to your energy, enthusiasm and sound practical advice.

Very sincerely yours,

Frank Murphy

FRANK MURPHY
Governor-General

Major Harvey W. Prosser,
Manila.

Chapter Twenty

The General did give me about three months extra so that the children could finish the school term. We took off for the United States via around the world, traveling by Dutch Lines most of the way. Somehow the Dutch officials had heard of my approving the extension of their airline into Manila, and at every stop in the Dutch Netherlands we were greeted by some official of the town and were driven to where ever we wanted to go and flown around the Island by the Dutch Airlines. In traveling around the Netherlands we visited the Island of Bali where the girls wear nothing above the waist. We did pick up some postcards. Also attended a ceremonial dance by the natives and visited the Monkey Forest. There was a Full Colonel traveling the same route, and he wanted to know who the Hell I was, met at every port and treated as though I was some VIP. We went on through Italy, Holland and England ending up on The Maiden Voyage of The New Amsterdam. On arrival in New York Harbor with all flags flying, the ship was given a warm welcome and an Air Corps Photographic plane took pictures. We were standing at the rail on the top deck and I sure thought it was my old friend Major Bolzien flying the plane. I wrote to him later and asked him for some pictures, it was not him but a Major Gaddered and I did get some pictures. We could be seen but of course not recognized.

The only thing we had on arrival back in the U.S.A. was a new Buick that I had to go to Flint Michigan and pick up. I had been ordered to Kelly Field, Texas, so we took our time visiting old friends on the way. This was in 1938 and Kelly was an advanced flying school for flying cadets, a graduation of about three hundred every month. A Colonel Lohman was in command and seeing I was next in rank I was made his executive officer. Brooks Field, a few miles south of Kelly was a sub base at that time. It was not too exciting a job, but I did get to do a lot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LEAVING FOR U.S.
Major Harvey W. Prosser, acting director of the bureau of aeronautics, Philippine Islands, has been assigned for duty to Aircorps Training Center, Randolf Field, Texas. The major will leave the Islands in February. Captain A. R. Crawford, U.S.A. Aircorps is relieving Major Prosser as acting director of the bureau of aeronautics.

of cross-country flying. Colonel Lohman was ordered to another station and Colonel Hubert Marman was ordered to Kelly. He did not report for quite some time so that left me in command. During that time the picture "I Wanted Wings" was filmed at headquarters at Kelly, with Ray Milland as the Hero. There was a lot of special flying in the picture and not enough spare pilots at Kelly so some were ordered from Brooks, and seeing they had to fly back and forth every day they were paid five dollars per day, not so for the flyers at Kelly.

One of the scenes was the graduation ceremonies, a real class of cadets with Ray Milland as one of the cadets. General Milard Harman, the Commanding General of the Southwest Flying School was the guest speaker, and after the speech he gave out the diplomas and I gave out the Wings. Of course I wrote to all my family and friends telling them to be sure to see this picture, BUT later I found out that the background of clouds was not right so they remade that scene over again in Hollywood. How nice.

The last day of the taking was a Sunday, Colonel Hubert Marman had reported in and taken command. I had asked the director of the picture and his staff to lunch that last day and meet Colonel Marman. The director said that they only had a few more scenes to take and had reservations on the three thirty train, and could not take the time for lunch, but would like to stop by the Club for a drink and meet the Colonel. It was just a short visit and as they left the director and his staff thanked me for my cooperation during the taking of the picture, all but the hero Ray Milland. He walked out of the club with his nose in the air and not a word to anyone who had helped him during the two months they were there.

During the time Colonel Marman was in command I was executive officer and we had a Master Sgt. by the name of Fee as Sergeant Major of the Base. Of course it gets rather hot in San Antonio and one day Sgt. Fee came to me and asked whether there was any chance of the personnel of the Field taking off their neckties and unbuttoning the collars of their shirts. My God, a Military man without a necktie. I loosened my tie and unbuttoned my shirt, My God it felt good. Lets go and see the Old Man. We asked Colonel Marman about it, and he said the same thing, loosening his tie, unbuttoning his shirt, "It's

hot, why not. I'll write Washington and see what they say." A short time later the answer came back, you could go without a tie and the collar unbuttoned ON the Base. Those living off the base could take the tie off when they get on the base and put it on again when they left. Blame Sgt. Fee for that smart idea. Of course it would have come eventually, but he was the one that got it started.

Four beautiful married officer's and three Non-commissioned Officers quarters had been built on the East end of Kelly and I being the Executive Officer got to move in the first one that was finished. How nice.

The Field at Lubbock, Texas, was being completed and I kind of had an idea I was going to be ordered there to take command. For a year or so I had had stomach pains and knew there was no Army General Hospital around Lubbock. I thought it best to go to the hospital at Ft. Sam Houston. They checked me over and found a few gall stones that might be causing the trouble, so decided to take the gall bladder out. Doctors are supposed to know what they are doing, so go ahead. I was operated on a Friday and Sunday I was in bad shape. Hoses down my nose and throat, so sick that when I vomited I could not even turn my head. There was a nurse working on me and about eleven o'clock in the evening the Full Colonel who had done the operation looked in my room, saw I was in trouble and came in and worked on me for awhile. I asked him what he was doing there at that time of night on a Sunday and he said that some soldier had got his belly cut open and he had to sew it up. He came back in about twelve and worked on me till about one, and at five o'clock Monday morning he was back in my room. I asked him if he had spent the night at the hospital and he said no he had not but woke up about five and got worrying about me so had to get dressed and come over to see how I was getting along. There are some really FINE Army Doctors.

Sure enough Colonel Marman called me in one morning and told me that he believed I knew I was to take over the Field at Lubbock. Would I rather go there or take over Command of Kelly Field? His brother, General Millard Harman had been ordered away from Command of the South West Training Center and that he, Hubert Marman was to be promoted to Star and take over his brother's place.

I told the Colonel that question seemed rather silly to me and he said that he knew it was, so left me at Kelly. I had been promoted to a Full Colonel. Then the trouble started. I had to move out of the new quarters and into the commanding officers old rambling set of quarters. It was really beautiful with landscaping all around it almost in the center of Kelly.

The first Saturday I was in command one of the older ranking Sergeants called me and wanted me to come to his quarters, he was in one of the new ones. I asked him what it was all about and could it not wait till Monday. He said that it involved the Oldest Master Sergeant on the Field and two eight-year girls of other sergeants living on the Field, one of them his. Oh, GOD. I went, and he showed me a letter supposedly written by Sgt. Doe, telling the girls to come on over to his place Saturday and he would put his finger up IT. Of course you could see the letter had been written by one of the girls who was very over sexed for her age, but there was sure some thing going on. I did ask the wife of Sgt. Doe if she knew anything about it and she said she did not know anything definite but had suspicions that some thing was going on. I had to have it investigated so I sent Colonel Red Sullivan, the executive officer and the officer lawyer in charge of the legal office. I had sent Sgt. Doe to the doctor and he reported there did not seem to be anything mentally wrong with him.

When Colonel Sullivan had the lawyer report back, Red said that he thought he had seen and heard everything BUT. They went up to the quarters in a government car and called the little girls to the door of the car. He said that he did not know just how to start asking questions regarding this subject, but finally asked it. Had Sgt. Doe been playing around with her, petting her and such? "Oh yes," the real over sexed girl said, "Sergeant Doe has been F------ me all summer!" Red fell back in the seat and said, "Little girl do you know what that word F---- means?". "Oh," she said, "My brother and I see Mother and Dad F------- all the time." "Well how does he do it, you are a small girl and he is a great big man?" "Well sometimes he puts me in the highchair and other times he gets down on his knees." More of the same kind and they finally left. The lawyer said that if we Court Martial the sergeant his defense attorney could tear the little girl's testimony to pieces and of course it would cause a big

scandal. If there was anything else I could do try that first.

A Lt. Col. (Chuck) Clark had been the Personnel Officer at Kelly for a long time and I knew him quite well. He had been transferred to the Personnel Office in Air Corps Headquarters in Washington so I wrote him a personal letter explained the situation and asked if he could have Sgt. Doe transferred away. A few days later a telegram came thru transferring him to Trinidad in the island off Florida. Then I asked the Sgt. of the over-sexed girl if he would mind moving off the Base. He agreed to this and that instance was cleared up. I did hear later that Sgt. Doe was promoted to a Major. How nice.

Chapter Twenty-One

A Flying Cadet Reception Center was organized and located just west of Kelly where Colonel Lackland had tried to build the headquarters of Kelly and the officers quarters, all buildings were built for the administration of these Cadets which numbered five thousand at one time. All under the Commanding Officer of Kelly Field. Finally a Colonel Mike Davis was ordered in and took command. Of course my Post Exchange officer had opened three or four exchanges at this camp and at one of the first meetings with Colonel Davis and myself, turning the command over to him. He asked me about the profit from these exchanges. Of course the Cadets had more money than the enlisted men so spent more. One of the Cadets had to have his Federal Income Tax OK'ed by the Adjutant. The Adjutant looked it over and said, "You mean your income was $280,000?" "No," the Cadet said, "That was the income tax he had to pay." How nice. Well anyway Mike asked me about the share of the profits that his command should get and I told him I would confer with my Post Exchange officer, a Major Robert Mills. I did and Mills checked his books and told me that the Center should get about fifty thousand dollars. Oh, My God, I did not know the exchange was making that kind of money. I told Mills that I would offer Colonel Davis thirty thousand dollars as his share. This I did at the next meeting. Mike looked at me and said, "My God we should get at least fifty thousand." I said, "OK, we'll give that much to you." Mike almost fell out of his chair.

The mission of Kelly Field at that time was the advanced training of flying Cadets who had completed primary flying at other fields, and their graduation as Military Pilots with the Reserve commission as 2nt Lt. There was a graduation about every three weeks of about three hundred Cadets. Each Cadet had to have two hundred hours of flying before they graduated.

(I was a Primary Flying Instructor in 1918 with fourteen hours in the air.) The graduation ceremonies were really something. All their families, girlfriends, etc. attending and generally filled a thousand man theater. The Secretary of the school arranged the ceremonies but depended on me to get the Guest Speaker. One time I could not find one and the Thursday before I was at the Operations Office and I heard the voice of Colonel Rollo Burns requesting landing instruction. Oh, Oh, there was my Guest Speaker and he did make a good one.

I had met General Eisenhower while serving on General MacArthur's staff in the Philippines, and now he was on duty in San Antonio. I read in the paper that he had just been promoted to his first Star, so I went down and congratulated him and told him the first speech he gave as a General was to be out at the graduation the following Saturday. Oh, you know Harvey I can't talk and so forth, but I finally talked him into it. Friday night the day before about ten he called me and said that he was just reading his speech over to his wife when he got a call from Washington that he had to leave at eight o'clock the next morning, Oh GOD. I was so shocked that I did not think to ask him to send his speech out and let me read. I told him that was a Hell of a thing for him to do for I would have to give the speech. He said, "I know I am putting you on the spot and I will repay you some way in the future." The way he repaid me was to have the Invasion of Europe on the 6th of June to celebrate my birthday. (Of course that's my story) The next day I had a couple of quick ones to get up my nerve and according to some reports did not do too bad.

Another Military Tradition Broken. Around the first of December 1940 I held an officers meeting in the thousand seat theater, there were very few vacant seats. That was when The Cadet Reception Center was under command of Kelly. I looked the crowd over and told them of the Old Tradition of The Commanding Officer of the Base holding open house for all officers and their families on New Years Day. Just look around you, over six hundred officers. So no open house in my small set of quarters this year. I talked with Lt. Col. "Whoppie" White, C.O. of Randolf Field a few days later and told him what I had done, he thanked me for he was worrying what he should do.

Talking of Lt. Col. White, he and I had a conference with

some VIPs of San Antonio one morning and after the meeting he and I adjourned to the Gunter Hotel, where I was very well acquainted with one of the managers, for lunch. Which we mostly drank. About one o'clock Whoppie said he thought he ought to call his secretary and see if everything was OK. She apparently said, "Congratulations COLONEL." "What do you mean, congratulations." She said, "Congratulations, you are a FULL COLONEL now." "Your a Damn Liar, I am only half-full!"

In looking back over my Command of Kelly for a couple of years I marvel at the smoothness and the efficient way the mission of Kelly Field was carried out. All due to the cooperation and efficient manner in which the officers, Non-commissioned officers and the Enlisted men carried out their duties.

One day I received word that one squadron of one hundred and fifty colored enlisted men would arrive the next day. Oh GOD. We readied up a barracks for them, and I welcomed them as they arrived. The next week Col. Clements McMullen, the Commanding Officer of Ducan Field which bordered Kelly on the south called me and told me that he was getting the same kind of a squadron and he had no place for them and would I take them. Duncan Field was an engineering and supply depot and ALL men had to be specialist in some occupation. I was

only too glad to get one hundred and fifty more men. Another barracks was readied, close to the other one and they were settled in. About the same time a captain who had been born and raised in the South reported for duty. He had apparently heard of his assignment for when he reported to me I welcomed him aboard and told him I had just the right job for him. "Yes I know, and I will do my best." He was assigned as Commanding Officer of the two colored squadrons. A short time later on one of my inspections of his barracks I asked him if he was having any problems. The worst being the training of the troops, most of them were raw recruits, the oldest serviceman had eighteen months service.

I enjoyed horseback riding and some time before I had gone over to the stables at Ft. Sam Houston to do a little riding. The first time I went there I was greeted by one of the two colored Sgt. with open arms. He had been stationed in the 25th Colored Infantry Reg. at Nogalas, Arizona, the same time I had been there in 1919. He had been a member of a liaison class and I had given him a ride in an airplane, so you can imagine the beautiful horses I used to get. The two of them had been assigned there waiting for retirement after about twenty-five years service. What a break. I went to General Donovan Commanding General of the Southern Department, told him of my problem and asked him if he could transfer those two Sergeants over to Kelly Field. If he could I would give them a promotion to the next higher rank, and of course, the General was very obliging and transferred them the next day. How lucky could I get. From then on no trouble whatsoever. One day the Personnel Officer came in and told me that there were two young officers just reporting. I told him to bring them in and in came two of the blackest young men I had ever seen. I welcomed them aboard and assigned them to the two color squadrons, told them all the privileges of the Post were open to them, Officer's Club, parties and what have you. They lived off the base, and I never did see them except on my inspections of their squadrons. How considerate of them. This was of course during the days of segregation.

Back to Sergeant Major Fee. He was still on duty at Kelly, later became a Major, should have been a Lt. Col. at least. He came into my office one day and said that the Beer Joints in

town were giving the Enlisted men a Hell of a time and would it be possible to open a beer garden on the Base. My, God, a saloon on a Military Post. Well after a little thought and conference with some of the higher ranking NCOs I agreed to it. There was a large repair hanger right next to headquarters building that was not being used so they cleaned it up and started the first Beer Garden on a Military Post. The Colored enlisted men were hired as waiters and I never saw one of them sit at a table. I used to inspect the place quite often and most of the time one of the older NCOs with his wife would invite me to sit down at their table. Most of them knowing I did not care too much for beer would ask me if I would care for something a little stronger and reach under the table and bring out a bottle. Very nice of them.

There was only one incident that occurred at this Beer Garden that I ever heard of. The Flying Cadets were patronizing the Garden and trying to steal the enlisted men's girlfriends, and flirting with the wives, so I had to put the Beer Garden out of bounds for all Cadets.

Of course there were lot of incidents that happened that sure relieved the monotony of such an efficiently run Base.

One Sunday I got a call that a Major Handly and his passenger, a Flight Surgeon Captain had been killed in a crash of their plane on a trip to the east. It was the Commanding Officers duty to notify the closest relative. I called the Personnel Officer for the address of these two officers. They were both married so had my wife accompany me and I called Major Story who was a very good friend of Handly so he and his wife went along. We stopped at Major Handly's home first, off base, Mrs. Handly and their two children were at home. I told her about her husband being killed and she took it in a very calm way. I left Major Story there, and my wife and I went to the doctor's home. His wife was home, much younger and married only a short time. It was really terrible. She went into hysterics, and I almost had to call a doctor for her, she quieted down before we left though.

Monday morning the Personnel Officer came in and asked what wife of Handly's did I notify. Well, it was the one he gave me the address of. He told me that she was not his wife. His wife was out at the Army Hospital at Ft. Sam Houston having a baby. Then the story came out. Handley had been playing

around and got his girlfriend in the family way. He and his wife talked it over and decided that they would secretly get a divorce, he would marry his girlfriend, after the baby came they would get a divorce and he would remarry his first wife. Not a person knew about it even her quite wealthy family. Of course a notice came out in the local newspaper mentioning his first wife's name and his real wife had to be talked out of suing the newspaper for not mentioning her name.

One Monday morning after a long weekend I was restless and standing at the operation office watching the flying. All of a sudden the ambulance took off in a hurry and I followed it to the upper end of the parking strip. The crowd of enlisted men opened up, and I saw a Captain Burton laying on the cement with his left arm off at the elbow. They put him in the ambulance to take him to the hospital, and I started to follow in my car. One of the enlisted men called and asked if I was going to the hospital and if so would I take his arm with me. There was nothing for me to do at the hospital for he was very well taken care of so I went back to get the story. There were planes on each side of the twenty-foot parking strip with all of their engines running, Burton came out of his office and was walking between the two rows of planes. It was right at the point where the taxi strip turned into the parking strip, a Cadet was just turning into the parking strip and with all the engine noise Burton did not hear this other engine and he was in a blind angle in front of the turning taxing plane and the Cadet did not see him. Burton was carrying his parachute over his left shoulder and the propeller caught his left arm at the elbow. Burton was wearing a leather flying jacket, it did not cut the jacket but pulled the sleeve out at the shoulder.

Captain Burton was in the hospital a very short time and when he was released he was physically retired as a Captain on Captains pay with about ten years of service. The day after he was retired General Harman recalled him to active duty for he was one of the outstanding officers of his command. He was assigned as commandant of the five thousand cadets at the Cadet Reception Center. I used to take visiting VIPs to the center for them to watch the Cadets in review, Burton in the lead of course. I would have asked them if they notice anything about the Captain in command and of course received very high com-

pliments on such a good looking officer. Then I would tell them about his left arm. Captain Burton ended up as a full Colonel in Command of Brooks Field, San Antonio. The regulation at that time was that any officer retired for disability and called back to active duty would be again retired after the emergency was over at the rank he had attained, if the further active duty had increased his disability, otherwise he would return to his original rank and pay retirement. How were you going to increase the disability of an arm cut off. I was in Washington and called a mutual friend in personnel and asked if something could not be done for such an outstanding officer. He said that about a hundred friends of Burton's had called, and it was being taken care of. The law was passed by Congress to the effect that an officer in Colonel Burton's position could be retired at the rank he had attained on his additional duty. How Nice.

Colonel Clements McMullen was in Command of Duncan Field which bordered on the south east side of Kelly. Col. McMullen called me one day and asked me if he could build a couple of small warehouses on Kelly's southeast corner, I told him that it would be all right with me as long as they were low buildings, but General Harman, Commanding General of all the Flying training schools of the southwest would have to approve it. We went out to Randolph to see the General and he asked me my advice. I told him it was OK by me But, "You had better watch Colonel McMullen for if you gave him on inch of Kelly he would have all of it in the near future." Mac said, "What the Hell do you think I am trying to do." Months later I got a wire from General Arnold asking my advice in turning over Kelly Field to Duncan. In conference with my executive officer, Col. "Red" Sullivan, we decided that it would eventually happen so why not now. We stood at the office window overlooking the oldest flying training field in the USA with almost tears in our eyes when we made up the affirmative reply. Of course it did not happen for a number of years.

There was a Colonel, later a General Osburn of the Corps of Engineers in charge of all construction at both fields. He came to me one day and said that Kelly had just been allotted two hundred and eighty thousand dollars to construct permanent parking platforms for the number of planes allotted to Kelly. Good God Almighty, what a mess that would be with

the number of Cadets taxiing planes around. I was able to get this project stopped, think of how nice it would be to save the taxpayer that much money. A couple of weeks later I was over at Duncan Field with on old friend of mine, Colonel Paul Wilkins, who had taken command. He and Colonel Osburn were on the field talking and I joined them. I noticed that there was some constructing going on, I asked Paul what it was all about, a couple of days ago you were crying because you did not have any money. Col. Osburn said, "Oh that is the money you saved over at Kelly." The poor taxpayers.

My wife and I went up to Johnson City to visit Kitty-Clyde and Jimmy Leonard the second week of December, 1942. Jimmy and I went deer hunting on Sunday the 11th, we climbed a lot of fences and I think at one time we were on LBJ's land. No deer of course. When we got back to the house about one we were rather worn out, and did run out of soda so we went down to the drug store and the radio was blaring so loud you could hardly think. Jimmy went over and cut it down and everyone yelled, "Leave that on the Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor with bombers."

My God, here I was in command of one of the largest airfields and ninety miles away. I called the office, got the executive, Colonel "Red" Sullivan and he had everything under control, the planes parked all around the field and everyone on the alert. I got back as soon as possible. Of course our activities were stepped up about fifty percent, and the officers and men continued the efficient operation on the Field. Major Elliot Roosvelt was a student in the Navigation School that had been started at Kelly. He took off for Washington that Sunday afternoon to confer with his Father, President Roosevelt. He returned a few days later, and he confided in me the inside dope that his father had told him. It was sure a MESS.

Some time later I got word from Washington that Kelly Field had been allotted five million dollars to camouflage the field. My GOD what a waste of money. Kelly about on the center line of the USA and two hundred miles from any navigable water. I could imagine the MESS on the field, tearing it up, planting and painting the buildings. I fought it to beat Hell and the only way I killed that was to go back to the records and report how many Cadets got lost on their return from cross-country

trips and could not find Kelly, especially at night. If the field was camouflaged, half of them would end up in Mexico.

One day the Weather Bureau notified the Air Corps in Texas that a cyclone was going to hit near Brownsville, Texas, and up along the border of Mexico. There was a number of Primary Flying Fields in that area and they were ordered to fly all planes into Kelly Field. We had five hundred planes in the hangars and tied down on the field. You guessed it, the cyclone hit within ten miles of Kelly. We had formed about a thousand Cadets from the reception center into groups of twenty and scattered them around the field and any time they saw a plane getting loose they would run and tie it down again. We did not lose a plane on the field but lost most of them that we had put in the hangars. The wind had broken the windows, got inside and no way to get out so they just churned around inside and wrecked all the planes. Even in the Great Big Hangar that had been built looked as though a bomb had exploded inside.

Of course there was always a poker game on the Base and it was reported to me that a Major and a Warrant Officer (a rank between an enlisted man and an officer) were not exactly cheating but coordinating with each other so that they ware taking all the money. I could not give them a written order for there was not supposed to be any gambling on a Military Post, so I called them in and told them that they were not to play poker on the Base. A short time later a Colonel Hall came into Duncan Field for an inspection and met the Commanding Officer, a rather quiet and humorless Colonel and Hall asked him where the poker game was. A poker game, why there is no game on this Base. My God, an Air Corps Base without poker game. Well of course he ended over at Kelly Officer's Club in a silly card game of some kind. Then the Major and Warrant Officer who lived off the base came in and said something about a game of poker. Colonel Hall said, "My God lets start one. I have been looking for one all evening. You will have to coma down to my quarters off base for the Old Man will not let us play on the base." They apparently went into another room for a minute or two and a Major who had been watching the play told the Colonel that he had batter watch his step if he got in a game with those two. "What do you mean, I know more about poker when I was a young Lieutenant than those two ever thought of." The next

morning the Major who had warned him heard he had lost four hundred dollars. He came to me and told me the story and sure enough a short time later the visiting Colonel called me and gave me HELL, he was going to report the Col. Arnold about my having a couple of card gamblers on the base. I laughed at him and asked him what he thought when the two told him that the Old Man would not let them play on the base and what of the warning by the Major. That was the last of that.

Sometime in September, 1942, Colonel Wilkins and I were called by Gen. Harman, Commanding General of the Flying Schools in the South over to a conference at Randolph. We went over together and somehow the talk got around to duty overseas. I told him that Kelly was running so smoothly it was getting a little monotonous and I would like to go over seas. He told me that General McClenend was looking for a full Colonel, flying, to take command of the three thousand man Air Depot Group now at Duncan in training for overseas duty with a non-flying Lt. Colonel in command. Col. Wilkins thought I could get the command if I wanted it. At the end of our conference with the General I asked him if he would release me if I could get an overseas assignment. He said, "I'll not only release you but court martial you if you do not take me with you." I called Gen. Mc and he OK'ed it. Got my orders a few days later to take command of the group. Generally the ranking officer takes command of the post he is assigned to. I did rank Paul Wilkins, but agreed not to take command.

A confidential report came through that President Roosevelt was making an inspection of Kelly and Duncan on a certain date. Colonel Davis, in command of the Cadet Reception Center held an officers meeting and explained that some visiting VIP was coming thru and he wanted a very large reception ceremony. One of the officers said, "My, GOD, you would think the President himself was coming."

For some reason Colonel Wilkins took leave and that left me in command. How nice of him. The train the President would be on would pass through Duncan Field first so I lined up my troops on each side of the track and as the train approached told them to pass the word down that the President would be on the observation platform for them all come to attention and salute. We mentioned how nice that was later on. My wife was

still living in the Commanding Officer's quarters at Kelly and I told her ahead of time and she had some friend out to lunch and all the children stood by the road and waved as the President passed in his own car that he had brought with him. Col. Groubbs had taken Command of Kelly and he was in the car as it approached the boundary of Kelly and Duncan. Groubbs got out and I was introduced to the President who was in the front seat, then we toured Duncan. My Group had returned from the tracks and as we passed their departure place they were practicing getting on board the train with all their equipment. The President was quite interested and stopped the car and watch them for a minute or two. Of course I told him it was my Command that I was taking overseas in a few days. It was a very interesting experience.

Chapter Twenty-Two

We did embark for the overseas concentration camp at Pittsburgh, Calif., in October, 1942. We stayed at this camp for a month or two in training for overseas duty the last was a twelve-mile hike which I took with the group much to their surprise.

Much to the officers joy there was a group of twelve nurses assigned to the same boat that we were to take. How lucky can you get. Oh, Yes. The last minute they were assigned to another boat going to New Zealand.

During our stay there I went with three other officers to San Francisco where we stayed at the Fairmont Hotel over the weekend. I had a large room facing across the bay toward Oakland and Berkeley. Sunday morning we all gathered in my room for breakfast and it was one of those beautiful clear California days. You could almost see the flies crawling up the campus on the Berkeley California University. None of the other officers had ever been to California and they raved about how beautiful it was. I told them to wait till we get out to the Cliff House on the beach and they would really see something. You guessed it, by the time we got out there about three the fog was so thick you could cut it with a knife.

Two of the nurses were very charming and My Adjutant, Capt. Matt Beard, and I escorted them around a bit during our stay at the camp, including a weekend tour of San Francisco.

We finally embarked for New Caledonia in the south Pacific. About the first day out one of the Sergeants come to me and asked about playing poker. I knew they would find a way somehow, so I gave them permission but would hold the higher ranking Sgt. responsible for an honest game. It was really a nice relaxing trip. I don't remember how many days but most of them sunny and warm. On our arrival in port one of the crew members came to me and told me the crew was mad as Hell at

me. I was the first one to allow open poker games so they held the games in their quarters and took out a cut on every hand. They didn't make a cent on this trip.

We disembarked and were taken out to a sight that had been selected for our base. It was across the road from the Tentuta Airport, the main airport of New Caledonia, up a kind of valley. All of the group's equipment had arrived prior to our arrival, it included steel buildings for the machine shops and warehouses, tents for the men and huts for the officers. The day after our arrival the personnel started to work and I mean WORK. For two weeks from daylight til sundown. At the end of this time one of the doctors came to me and told me I had better call a one day holiday, that the men were getting exhausted. He had just passed a steel building going up and saw a man drop his end of a steel beam, if it had hit anyone it would sure have killed him. The next Sunday I called a complete stoppage of all work and told the men to relax, clean up their tents, their clothes and themselves. There was quite a large river close by and most of them went swimming.

A couple of days later I got a letter from General Millard Harman who was Commanding General of The Southwest Pacific, stating that he had inspected the 13th Air Depot Base on the Sunday that I had called off all work and found all offices and shops closed. Of course he did not have the courtesy to stop by my office, I was there that Sunday.

He stated that this area was in The Combat Zone and all offices and shops would be open seven days a week, but that every enlisted man would get one day a week off. I explained the reason and that I was in my office that morning if he had only come by. I also told him the engineer officer was setting up an engine overhaul line and would like to close that building one day a week otherwise there would have to be two men for each job. Nothing doing. Later I asked again and told him that this department would be able to overhaul ten more engines a month if we could close it one day. No soap.

My engineer and Supply officer came to me and asked if I could get them permission to fly up north and meet all the engineering and supply officers at the bases they were stationed at, get to know them, and hear any troubles they had, thereby working more efficiently together. I thought that was a Hell of

a good idea and gave myself hell for not thinking of it before they did. I called General Harman and he said the same thing that he would have orders out for them the next day. I asked to go along, and he agreed. About an hour later Colonel Nate Twinning, he was on the General staff as air officer, called me and asked me what the Hell was going on, three of you going up to where the fighting zone was. "We don't want any sightseers up there." I told him that was mostly my reason for going and to leave me out of it, but I thought the engineering and supply officers could do a Hell of a better job if they knew the officers they would be working with. "Hell no I won't let you go." I ranked Hell out of him until he got his star. About two months later the Supply officer did an outstanding job on some supply problem and at a party one evening GENERAL Twinning complimented me on it and of course I opened my big mouth and put my foot in by telling him, "See, if you had let them go north as General Harman thought was a good idea, he could have done that job much sooner." He looked down his nose at me, turned and walked away. He had gotten his first STAR by then and I was still a lowly Colonel.

There was a Captain Chaplin assigned to the Group and of course he made all arrangements for the Christmas holidays. About two weeks before Christmas he came to me and asked for a ten-day leave, he had a chance to fly to New Zealand. I told him that was OK but to be sure to be back in time for Christmas. He assured me he would be. Matt Beard and I had made arrangements to have Christmas dinner with the two nurses we had met at the overseas Camp. They had been sent to New Zealand. We left about three days before Christmas and That Damn Chaplin had not returned. Was I mad. On our arrival in Auckland I heard that the Chaplin claimed he had fallen off a truck, was hurt and turned himself into a hospital. I did not have time to see him so I did not know how truthful he was. The two girl friends had been sent to Wellington, located on the southern tip of the north island. The New Zealand Air Force offered to fly us down, but the weather turned too bad to fly so we were advised to take the overnight train down. BUT to be sure to be in such a condition that we would sleep all the way, for it was a HELL of a rough trip. We did and were met by our friends and a very enjoyable two days was spent there.

The weather had cleared, and the Air Force flew us back to Auckland. On the way the pilot flew us over most of the Island, mountains, streams, villages etc. The Chaplin came to see me and said he was OK again, and to pacify me he introduced me to a liquor dealer who told me he did not have much of a supply on hand but was expecting a shipment in a week or two and if I would send a plane down he would sell us some. This I did, and the plane returned with forty cases of Pinch Bottle Hag at the cost of THIRTEEN DOLLARS and EIGHTY-FIVE cents a case. Not Bad. When we ran out of this batch I sent another plane down and he had raised the price to twenty-five dollars a case. We got mad at him.

Things rolled along in rather an efficient manner for I had never seen such a wonderful group of officers and men. The gunner section had tried to improve their delivery of ammunition to the four machine guns in the nose of the B-25s. The guns place two on the floor and two above them and the links feeding the ammunition had too many curves in them. I drop by the gunnery section late at night and the men would be working on a new design. The four guns on the floor alongside each other. They installed this in a plane, and it worked to perfection. We sent this plane up forward and all of the pilots approved of it, so we gradually installed this set up on all B-25s. I knew that the men of the gunnery section had done an outstanding job, working mostly at night, so I went to General Harman's headquarters and talked with a very good friend of mine, Colonel William Ball, a member of the General's staff and asked him about some kind of a citation for all of them. Billy said that he knew the General would be glad to for that was one of his policies giving credit where credit was due. Instead of giving the men a medal he sent me a letter of commendation. And I had nothing to do with this invention. Of course I passed it on to the Gunnery Section, but I did not like the General's action.

The group had acquired three C-24 twin engine cargo planes. I remember how we got one of them. We had to station a Non-com and a couple of men at the landing field call PDG, about fifty miles north where all the transport planes landed and we would send a plane up for the supplies that arrived there. One day a pilot brought back the report that a C-24 had landed there, run off the runway and the right wing had hit a

tree. The pilot of this plane left it there, climbed into another plane and took off. I tried to find out who this plane belonged to but never could. It was not badly damaged so we repaired it and kept it as one of our planes. It was really the best plane we had, and was named SNAFU (Situation Normal all Fowled up).

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of the President came in one day on a ten-day inspection tour of this section of the South Pacific. Seeing this plane SNAFU was about the best for her to fly in, General Harman asked me to take over and I assigned two pilots to fly her. On the return ten days later I noticed that the name of the plane had been changed to OUR ELEANOR, whether she found out the real meaning of SNAFU or not I do not know.

I thought that having the Transport planes land at PDG fifty miles away from any Military set up was rather foolish. Of course there was a two thousand foot mountain peak about twenty-five miles from the landing field at Tontouta and one of the Transport planes had run into it, damaging it, landing in the water and killing all on board. General Harold George, the Commanding General of the Air Corps Transportation Command came in on a trip and I had a conference with him, told him my trouble and finally convinced him to move his set up down to Tontouta. I picked a place for his camp about a quarter of a mile from the operations office just below a little knoll where a water tank could be placed so they could have running water. The General on his next trip in said "No. I want my camp right close to the operations office." (so the men in slack time could slip over and take a little nap.) Well we built about a million dollar set up right next to the operations office. General George flew in to inspect it, there was a layer of thick clouds about a thousand feet above ground. We advised the General's pilot to go on out to sea for we could see the sun shinning there and come in under the clouds. No they must come thru the clouds. When they landed General George came up to me with one of his staff, a General Ryan, right behind him. The General asked where in Hell is that mountain, I pointed towards it, you could see the start of it. General George said, "No we will not move down here." I looked up at General Ryan and he winked at me. Another million dollars wasted.

There was quite a number of New Zealand WACS on

duty in the town and of course were dates for the officers lucky enough to find one. There was an Island regulation that there would be no inter-country marriages unless there was a baby involved. One of my officers came to me and asked permission to marry one of these girls. I told him of the regulations and he said there was a baby involved. I wrote through to the Island commander and got his permission for the marriage. We put on a big show inviting all the VIPs from Headquarters, including General Harman who did not show up. I later heard that the General was rather put out with me. Here he was trying to stop such marriages and Prosser puts on a BIG show. And of course there was no baby involved.

There was a Colonel Ware Cook in command of Tontouta Air Corps Base and he was going around with the head nurse of the hospital located on his base. We got word that he had been flying a P-51 with two other planes. He had made a steep dive, pulled up and at the top of the climb must have passed out for he fell into a spin and never came out of it. General Harman asked me if my Chaplin would take care of the funeral arrangements. I called him in and told him what the General wanted, and he asked me where the body was. I told him he would have to go and find it. We talked with one of the other pilots who was along and found out about where it had happened. He started out and returned late the same evening, I was in my office and he came in and reported he had found the body. I asked him where it was and he told me in a shoe box in the jeep. The plane had caught on fire and all he could find was this one foot. We held the funeral services in town, and I accompanied his nurse girlfriend who felt very mournful at his death. I comforted her as best I could, and to get her to kind of forget the instance took her to most of the parties from then on. A very charming young lady.

The work of the supply section was beginning to pile up so I requested another supply squadron be added to the group. It was granted. Then a conference was held with General Harman and Twinnig, and it was decided to request another entire depot group situated further north, closer to the fighting line. This of course, I thought would advance my chances of a promotion to General that I was pretty sure was on the way. I suggested that my engineering and supply officers go north and find a suitable location for this depot. "No, I want it right now."

The last I heard of it was that all the equipment, including the steel building and machinery, was laying on a beach, rusted and the waves washing over it.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Much to my surprise and disappointment I received an order relieving me from C.O. of the 13th Air Depot, and ordered me to take command of Tontuta Air Base. That was the largest base in the South Pacific and after Col. Cooks death was commanded by a reserve Lt. Col. non-pilot. I heard later that years ago Harman, Twinning, McCoy and two or three others were at a base club having a small gathering and agreed that if any one of them went to town in rank they would take the others along with them. I also heard that Gen. Twinning, who hated my guts, I guess, asked General Harman to relieve me, give me some kind of a medal and send me home, ordering Col. McCoy to take my place. General Harman would not do this so he had the other order come through.

Being so down in spirits I took a few days leave. The Sergeant of the Supply Section had toured the Island in his spare time and had met a very nice French family on the other side of the island. The only way to get there was by jeep over a very rough road. He gave me a letter to this family and my nurse, and I took off. We stayed with these friends for about three days, touring the East Coast of the Island.

I took command of the Air Base, a rather important position but very monotonous. The men of the 13th Depot Group brought over a wooden hut, set it up on the top of a small knoll, installed a water tank, built an out-house and septic tank. That was how much they liked me.

One of the duties of the C.O. was to meet all incoming VIPs, and see them off. General Harman, who I thought I knew quite well, would come out and fly up to the front lines and I would meet him on his return and ask him how things were going up there. He'd say "Oh all right," and walk away. Admiral Halsay, whom I had just met over there would come back from up north and I would ask him the same question. We would

stand there for fifteen or twenty minutes while he was waiting for his car and give me all the dope. Also saying that if they would only do as he suggested the war would be over. He was quite an officer and gentleman.

One day my chaplain came to me and told me that General McArthur had just landed. My God, the Commander of the whole Pacific landed on my base and I was not out there to greet him. I jumped in the jeep and went out to the field and sure enough he and a few other officers were walking on the other side of the landing strip. They came back across and I went up and saluted him and he said, "Hello Harvey, what the Hell are you doing here." I told him that I thought I was in command of the field, but he lands and I am not out to meet him! If you had been, he said, some one would get Hell, this is a secret mission and no one is supposed to know about it. He was going to that meeting with the President on the Island of Guam.

There were seven chaplains who had gotten together in Numa and decided to visit each military base on the Island and give a sermon each evening for a week, a different chaplain each night. They came to Tentuta and the first evening, I was busy so could not attend. The next morning I asked the Sgt. Maj. who had attended how it went. He told me that a very nice young chaplain gave the sermon and it was very good. The only trouble he stood there and read the whole thing which distracted about 50% from his presentation. At lunch my chaplain introduced all the others to me and they were kind of disappointed that I had not attended the night before. I told them I would be there that evening and also what the Sgt. had said. Later my chaplain told me that the head of the group was going to give the sermon that evening and he was going to read his speech. He said the poor fellow did not know what to do. He made a few notes from his speech and I thought he gave a very good sermon.

The position became rather boresome, but small problems did come up that kept my interest up. One day an Old Friend, General Paul came through, I met him and he asked me what the Hell I was sitting around on my fanny doing nothing. I explained the situation, and he told me By God I am going to get you over in command and put you to work. He was Commanding General in the South West of the Material Department. Sure enough my orders came through ordering me

to Australia. I reported there and went looking for my friend and found he had taken a short leave. General McArthur, the over all Commander had taken a suggestion by some DUMB so & so and formed a Joint Supply and Survey Board. He appointed a Colonel Crammer, a department store owner in New York as Chairman of this board. Then appointed A Colonel from each branch of the service, including the Navy as members of this board. Seeing I had just arrived and my friend had not grabbed me, I was appointed as Air Corps representative. Our mission was to visit all the supply sections of installations and to see if they were run efficiently. I inspected a few Air Corps Bases and of course could find nothing wrong. General Prentice returned and was as mad as I was that I had been assigned to another job.

I did inspect a very large abandoned aircraft engine overhaul installation full of beautiful machinery and heard that a local Ford agency wanted to buy it for fifty thousand dollars. I wrote up a report, recommended that it be sold and sent it to the Chairman of the Board for his approval. He turned it down explaining that after the war the same agency would have to buy new machinery from the United States and thereby help the economy. He was the Boss.

General Prentice asked me if I did not want an airplane to make my inspection in. Of course I did and a war weary B-25 was turned over to me. I had it inspected, put in good condition and test flew it. Everything OK, but Paul said that I would have to have General Kenny's approval, he was Air Corps Commander in that area. I wrote up the request and wrote in Colonel Crammer's approval and took it in for him to sign. He looked up at me and said, "I won't let you have it." My God our own plane, could fly any member of the board anyplace. "No you can't have it." He was Boss. Sometime later he was stranded at some jungle airstrip for two weeks and came back mad as Hell and of course I opened my Big Mouth and put my feet in by saying, "See if you had let me have that airplane I could have come up and flown you back." It was a great life though. The quartermaster Corps Colonel and I had a house together with a woman to take care of us including our meals. Each officer in Brisbane had a ration allowance of two fifty per day. If you bought all your meals at restaurants in town all you could

pay was the $2.25 dollars, for they were limited. I hear that the month before I got there the ration allowance was $4.00 dollars a day. General Prentice had a beautiful launch and we spent a lot of our spare time on it.

I took a months leave in 1944 and came back to the USA, by air of course. On the return flight we took off from Hamilton Field, California about nine o'clock in the evening, in a four engine transport plane. On the take off one of the engines cut out a little and the young pilot returned immediately. We made a beautiful landing with such a heavy loaded plane and I complimented him on it. He said that you sure had to watch yourself on landing such a plane for if you dropped it an inch in landing the landing gears would collapse. They worked on the engine, and we got off again about eleven, headed for Hawaii. Three quarters of the way this same engine quit entirely. Of course, the gasoline supply was very low so the plane could fly on three engines. We arrived at Hickom Field and the engineer Officer said they would have to replace the engine, for all the passengers to be within an hours call. I knew it would take some time to change this engine so talked with the officer and told him I had a sister in-law living on the other side of the island and that I would like to visit. He said it was OK for me to leave and to leave a phone number where he could call. He called a week later.

Their home was on the beach and I spent a lot of time along the beach and in the nice warm water. On the Sunday I was there I was walking up the sand and I saw Admiral "Bull" Halsay coming down the beach with a young lady who turned out to be General Harman's private secretary. (The Navy's Flag Officers resort was about a mile up the beach from my sister-in-law home, a Flag Officer in the Navy is a Captain or above. The Captain equal to a Colonel in the Army.) The Admiral recognized me and asked me what the Hell I was doing there. I told him my story and invited them to my sister-in-laws home, this was about eleven o'clock in the morning, for a drink. I also congratulated him on his third Star and the action his Third Fleet had performed in the China Sea. He replied "Harvey, I never had so much fun in my life."

We spent about three hours indulging a bit and the Admiral telling of some of his most exciting experiences. My

sister-in-law and her husband sat there during this time with their eyes and mouths open not having had any connection with any military. Of course, they were living in the valley just out of Honolulu the day the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and the planes flew right over their house. The engine was finally installed, and I arrived back at my desk in Manila.

Finally most of the other officers were relieved of their assignments on this board, including the Colonel Crammer, leaving me as the only member. The Joint Supply Survey Board of course was on General MacArthur's Staff and we followed him north to Hollandia, Philippines, and ended up on the second floor of the Manila City Hall.

I finally convinced one of the powers that be that it was a waste of personnel and time keeping the Joint Supply Survey Board. He used some good common sense, disbanded the board and I was ordered back to Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas, where my wife and family were living. Thank God.

The prediction I had made several years ago had come true. Duncan Field had taken over Kelly and was known as Kelly-Duncan Field. It was a supply and engineering depot, Commanded by General George Beverly. I reported to him and he assigned me to the job of closing up Stinson Field which was under his command. It was rather an interesting job for I had never done anything like that before. It was accomplished in a short time, during the summer. My daughter was on vacation from school so I gave her a job as clerk on the base. One evening on leaving for home we passed through the gate and there was a group of enlisted men waiting for a bus. One off them was a colored soldier wearing a pair flyer's wings. I called him over to the car and told him that I did not know there was an enlisted pilot on the field! "Oh!" he said, "I'm not a pilot, but I told my girlfriend I was." I told him to take the wings off till he got close to his girlfriend and then he could put them on again. All the other men got a big kick out of it.

During my stay at Kelly Field my daughter was attending school in San Antonio, then she went to Smith's Girl School in the east for a year and returned to San Antonio to go to high school.

On some of my trips to Johnson City we met a rancher friend of Jimmi Leonard, a Frank Clark. For some reason we

became very good friends and every time we went to visit he and his family he would have something for me, like a small piglet all scrubbed and ready for the oven. On one of our trips he asked my daughter, Velma, to come out with him and he showed her a beautiful roan colored three-year old horse and he told her that as soon as he had it well trained the horse was hers. Of course we had stables at Kelly and kept the horse there. She rode the horse in a lot of events and collected a number of ribbons.

Velma also became a member of the Girls Lasso Club of the High School and did they put on some beautiful shows. Kelly Field took a small scout plane into town and assembled it on the plaza in front of the ALAMO and of course the Lasso Girls performed their stunts on the wings of this plane once or twice a week.

On graduation from High School my daughter wanted to go to the University of Texas with her friends. But there had been a scandal on one of the professors and I said, "No." Well then you have to get me in Stanford. No trouble at all. I know a Doctor Barer of San Francisco who was a very close friend of the President of Stanford. I made a special flight out and contacted this friend telling him my troubles and seeing he was such a good friend of the President of Stanford to get him to have my daughter in. He said that he had a niece that had been crazy to go to a Stanford and now she is going to University of California. My God, you being such a friend of the BOSS. Well, he said if your daughter did not have the credits she could not make it. Well she did and graduated four years later.

My Son, Harvey Jr., was interested in the Air Force Service prior to his going to High School. He took a year in a private military school in San Antonio. After graduating from High School he wanted to go to West Point. Our GOOD FRIEND, Frank Clark of Johnson City was a very personal friend of Congressman Connolly and said that when Harvey was ready to go he would arrange it thru Connolly. Harvey kind of thought getting in on a presidential appointment might be more highbrow, so he went to Sullivan's Cadet Preparatory School, took the Presidential examination and was appointed to West Point by the President, in 1946. Graduating in 1950 transferred to the Air Force and following The Old Man's footsteps became a

pilot.

When that mission was completed I reported hack to General Beverly and he said he had a desk job for me. I told him that I had heard that Davis-Monthen Field at Tuscon, Arizona, was losing its C.O. How about my taking over. "Oh, you want a command do you. I have just the place for you. Hobbs, New Mexico." The Field up there was preparing B-25 and 26s lot storage. And he was having a little trouble with the officer who had command. I was ordered there and found out most of the trouble was that the C.O. was spending most of his time at the church he belonged to. Some of the other trouble was that there were about as many civilian employees as there were enlisted men and they were working together with a lot of friction. I separated them and ran a contest to see which group could prepare the most planes. A fancy B-26 came in that probably belonged to a General so I took it over as my plane and used to make a trip to Kelly once or twice a month over the weekend to visit my family.

There was a very nice young Chaplain stationed there and the first Sunday I was there I went to his church. On exit he greeted me and that evening at the club I got talking with him and he told me he had eighteen months service and I was the first Commanding Officer who had ever attended one of his services. I asked him how I was to make out his efficiency report if I did not observe the way he performed his duties.

Sometime later I got a call from General Beverly, Kelly-Duncan Field was under the Command of the Material Department of the Air Force and of course the Base was part of the Material Department. The Air Corps was under the Command of the Army till 1945 when it became the Air Force, a separate unit of the Military establishment. Of course the Commanding General of the Material Department was my OLD FRIEND General Nate Twinning. General Beverly said that General Twinning was making an inspection of all his Bases in the south and would be at my place at two o'clock on a certain day. Of course I had the entire Base looking spic and span, kept the civilians on the job, had the enlisted men and officers lined up meet the Inspection Team at the time stated. Two hours later I got a call from General Beverly that General Twinning was running a little late and knew that my Base would be in perfect

condition and was going to bypass it. A nice two hours wasted.

I do not know whether Twinning knew I was a member of his Command up till that time, but about three weeks later I was relieved of Command and ordered to become a member of a retirement board, stationed at Wright-Petterson. That was one of the worst. A reserve officer who could prove he had become disabled during his active duty could retire on a pension, otherwise he would just be returned to inactive duty. Listening to some of the officer's and gentlemen's stories of their disability and how it came about was enough to turn your stomach.

I had enough of that and was finally ordered to THE INSPECTOR GENERALS Department of the Army in Washington D.C. which had all the authority in the world, investigating all complaints dealing with all military matters. I was made chief of the complaints branch, minor complaints, mostly from enlisted men. One mother wrote from Belgium that an enlisted man had DEFLOWERED her daughter and she had a baby. I received a letter from a wife at Ft. Sam Houston that in the non-commission officers club they had a dollar slot machine and her sergeant husband and son, also a sergeant were losing their monthly pay most every month. I need some flying time so I went into see the general and told him I would like to go down and investigate. "Oh no, we do not do it that way. You endorse it to the Commanding General of Ft. Sam Houston and he will turn it over to the inspector at the Post and he will make the investigation!" I told the General that all letters to the command were opened by the Post Sergeant Major, and he most always was the President of the Club. That was true, but do it the routine way. Of course about two weeks later the report came back that there were no dollar slot machines in the Club. It was really very interesting work. One little thing that happened while I was in this office was a deposition came to me for my approval, why I don't know. Some dumb so & so had recommended that all company punishment of enlisted men be recorded and that record follow him the rest of his military career. My God, I hit the ceiling. An enlisted man gets in the dog house with the top sergeant of the outfit and every time he blinks his eyes at the wrong time in front of the top sergeant he gets confined to the post, or KP duty (kitchen police), clean up the barracks. He reports to a new organization, and the top kick looks over his past

record of company punishment. What is thought of him. I went down to General Paul, the officer in charge of the personnel section of the Army. Told him my view of the subject and he said Prosser you are right, disapprove it and I will back you up.

I had heard that a number of my friends who had the permanent rank of Lieutenant Colonel and a temporary rank of Full Colonel, had been reduced in rank to their permanent rank. Of course this could never happen to me, but sure enough I got it. After almost thirty-one years of some very important commands and as for as I was concerned performed in very efficient manner.

Well, the HELL with them, so requested retirement. An officer we retired after thirty years service would draw seventy-five percent of his highest-rank pay and the same percent rate of all increases of active duty pay. Till that 'D' ex-Army officer Eisenhower became President and signed a law that all officers retired before 1958 would only get a cost of living increase. That was the meanest thing any ex-army officer could do. Right away the Retired Officers Association had a number of Congressmen and Senators present a recomputation Bill that would restore the old rate of pay for retired officers, and with every President after Eisenhower promised in his campaign speech if he got elected he would see the Bill passed. We are still waiting. A colonel friend of mine retired in 1972 and is receiving five hundred dollars more a month than I am. That so & so.

During my duty at Crissy Field, Presidio of San Francisco, I met a Mr. Stacy Morrow, the brother of Edward R. Morrow, the famous newscaster, and we became well acquainted. I met Stacy again in Washington and we renewed our friendship. At one of the parties at his home I met his brother and enjoyed a very interesting evening with him.

I told Stacy about my intended retirement and he asked me would like a job. He was one o the VIPs of the American Association of Railroads and they were considering organizing an Aviation Section, Great. Their office was right around the corner from where I lived so I dropped in quite often planning the new section. All of a sudden Stacy was out or too busy to see me. Then one day his secretary told me he was busy with a General Breen. There went that job.

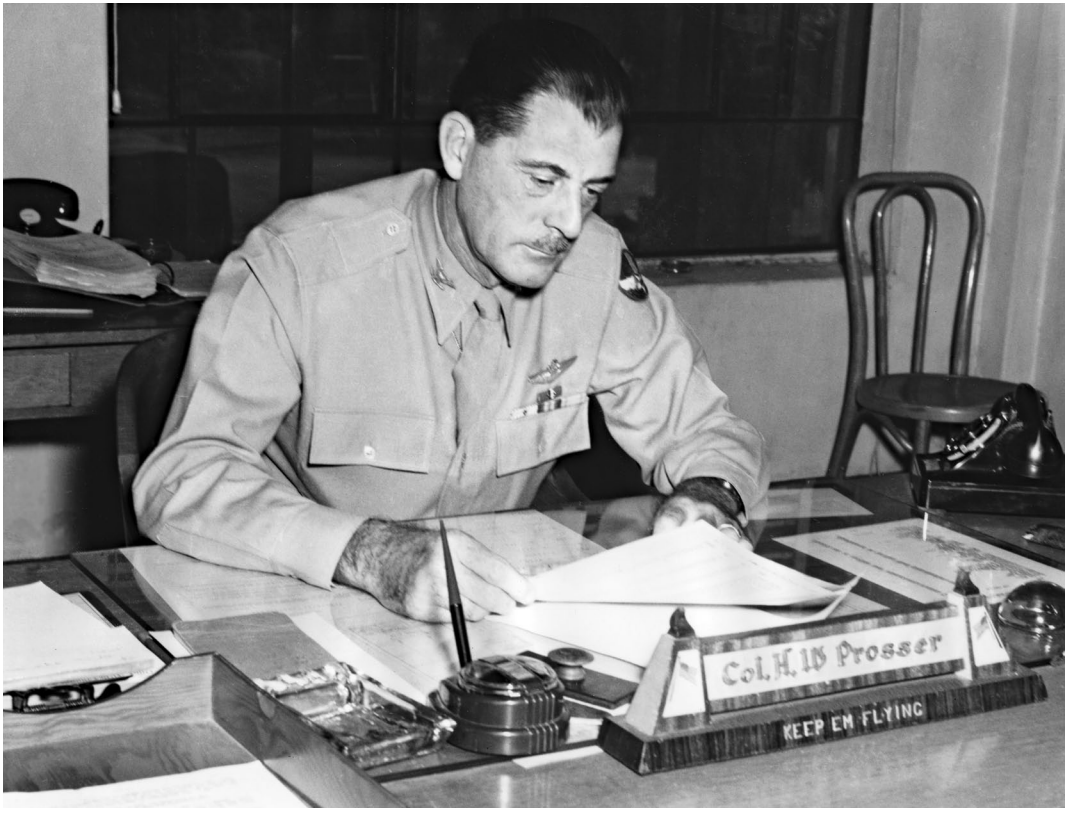
Stacy had been in the Washington State National Guard

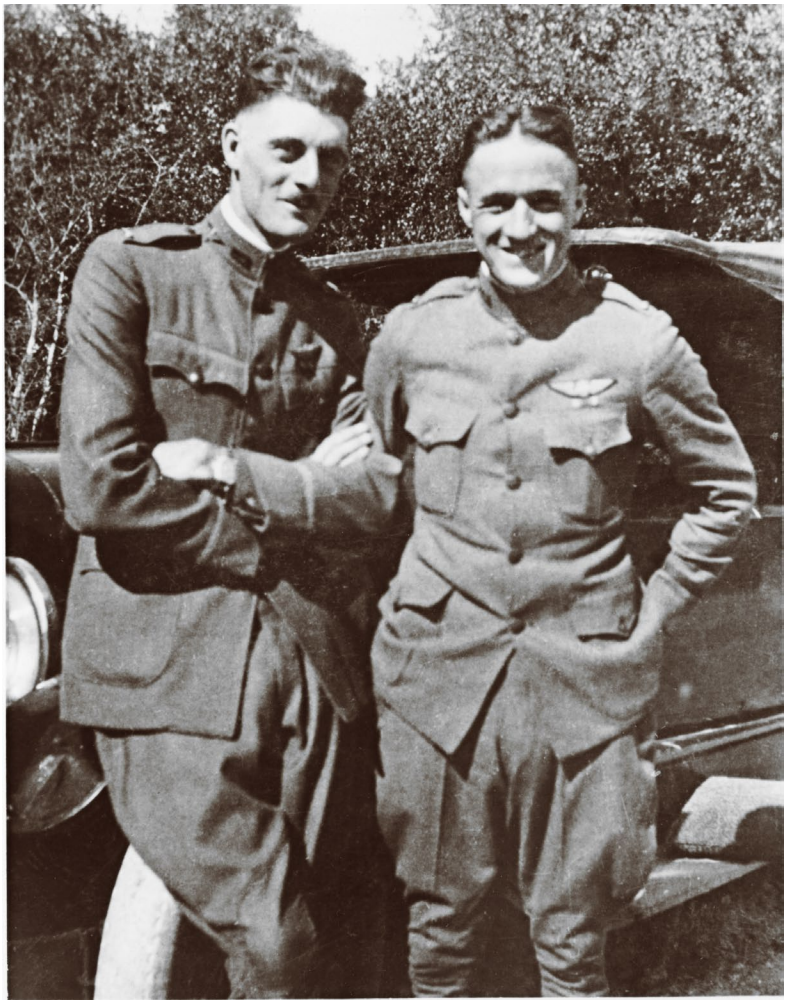
and Daddy Breen had been the commanding officer, and of course I was in the Dog House with the General.

A friend of Stacy's, whom I met, was a VIP in the U.S. State Department and stated they were looking for a U.S. citizen to represent a foreign country on the World Wide Aviation Organization at a very good salary, and he thought I would be able to take on this position and would so recommend. There was a lot of Red Tape, of course, and in the meantime this State Department friend said there was an immediate opening as the manager of the Damascus Airport. I told him I would think about taking that job and by the time I decided the airport manager would be best they had written in a letter suggesting another chap, but they would wire my name over, and of course to late, and the other job did not pan out.

So I fully retired the 28th of February and returned to my home town of Oakland, California.

Photos






A.M. 513 CAPT. H. W. PROSSER SUP. OFF. PEARSON FIELD A.M. RT. 5


Your very Sincerely
Robert G. Lyon
經菲政府航空處考驗飛行及格與正副處長合影


My privat
plane

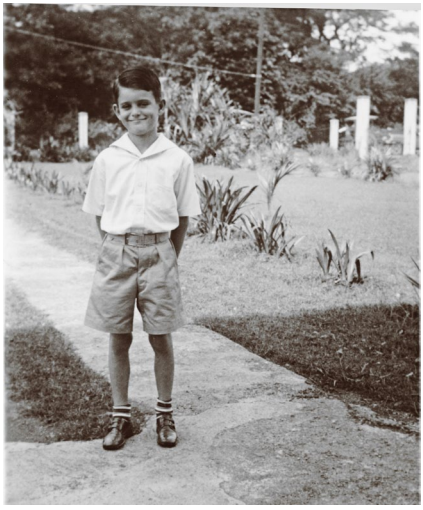
Harvey Sr. & his parents

Bess Prosser née Jennings

Bess Prosser
née Jennings

Bess Prosser née Jennings

Bess Prosser née Jennings



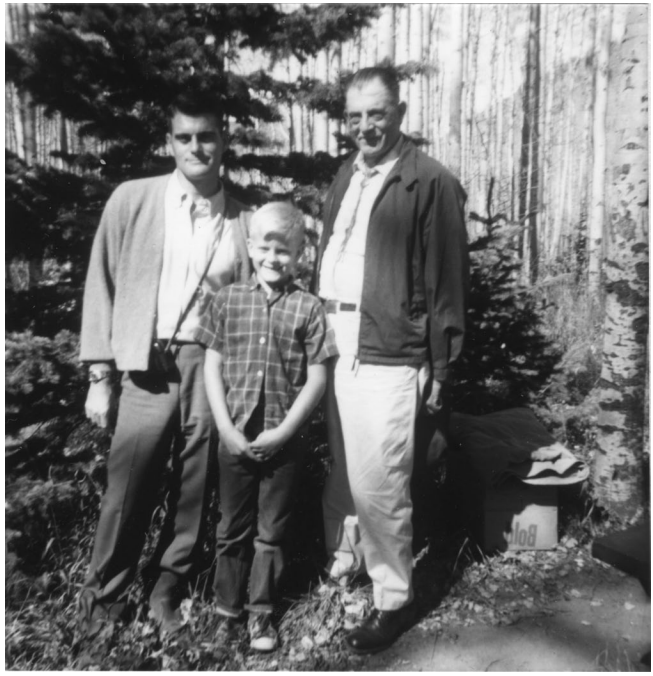
Harvey W. Jr.

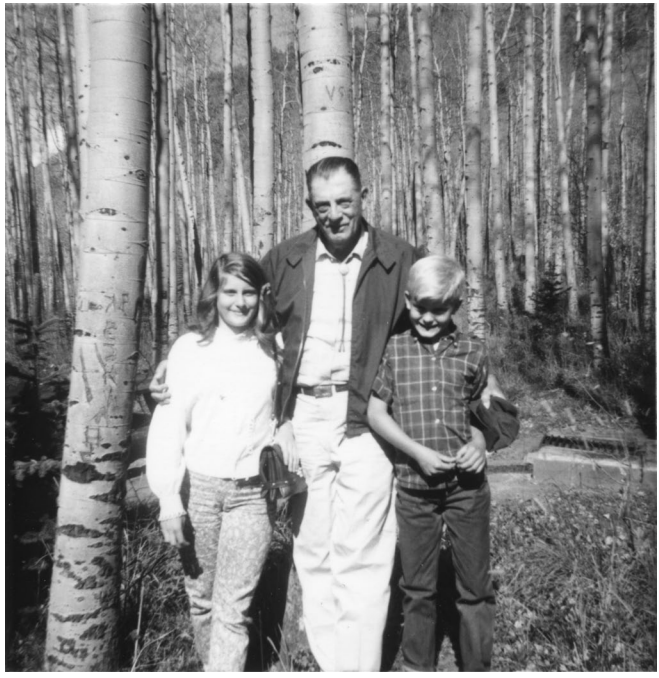
Harvey W. Jr. & Velma

Harvey W. Jr. & Velma

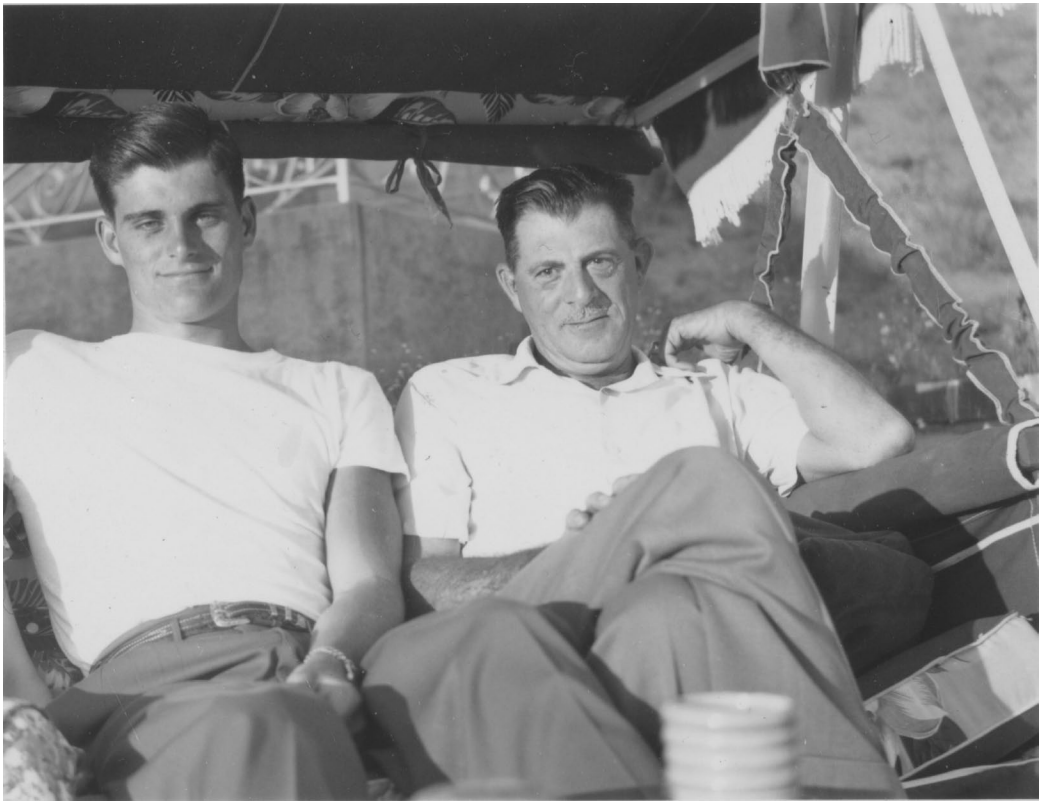
Harvey W. Jr. & Velma

Harvey W. Jr. & Velma





Harvey Sr. & Jr. and Steven & Jenifer Prosser



Harvey Sr. & Jr.